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HOMELESS YOUTH

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION
ON
THE PROBLEM OF HOMELESS YOUTH

DECEMBER 1, 1988

CHICAGO, IL

Serial No. J-100-89

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HOMELESS YOUTH

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1988

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Chicago, IL.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m., in room 2541, Dirksen Federal Building, 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, Senator Paul Simon (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PAUL SIMON

Senator SIMON. We are holding a hearing of the Subcommittee on the Constitution of the Senate Judiciary Committee on the problem of young people who fall through the cracks in our homeless programs. We have homeless programs that deal with and assist children; we have homeless programs that deal with and assist adults, but there are a great many people in this country between the ages of 16 and 21 who fall through the cracks.

I would like to just read a staff memo that describes the situation here in Illinois.

Two recent studies have been done on homeless youth in Illinois, one by the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, and the other by a task force commissioned by the Governor in 1985. Both paint a dismal picture. While it is difficult to determine the exact number of homeless youth, both studies found that in 1985 there were upwards of 20,000 homeless youth in Illinois, 10,000 alone in Chicago. Of the 10,000 in Chicago, 4,000 of them were under 18.

The studies found that between 45 and 60 percent of the children left home because they were abused or neglected. The Governor's task force found that nearly 7,900 of the 20,000 homeless youth in Illinois were rejected by their parents.

The reason the parents rejected the children varied, but include alcoholism, mental illness, drugs or economic hardship. Sadly, once on the street these children often are exploited and turn to delinquency, prostitution, and drugs to survive. The Governor's task force found that 9,000 youngsters were sexually exploited while on the streets, and over 7,000 became pregnant or are teen mothers. AIDS is another problem for these young people.

There are insufficient services available for these young people. The Governor's task force found that services for the 18- to 20-year-old population are very limited because these children are often not old enough for adult shelters and are too young to live independently. The Governor's task force noted that teaching this age

group independent living skills must be a high priority. The under 18 population is also under-served because of a shortage of shelters and counseling services. Interestingly, only 20 percent of the homeless youth avail themselves of those services that do exist.

The Governor's task force made a number of recommendations.

Clearly we have a problem. We are here to find out what we do about this problem. I was able to get \$5 million attached to the drug bill that passed Congress to deal with this problem. It was signed by the President recently. But I am not fooling myself and I don't think anyone in Congress is fooling themselves that \$5 million is a serious assault on the problem.

We are here to hear from experts. We are going to hear from three real experts, young people who have been involved themselves. I am very appreciative of the interest that is being shown here. Let me add my thanks to my staff and also the staff of Senator Spector for their interest.

[Information supplied for the record follows:]

news from

PAUL SIMON

U.S. SENATOR

Thursday, Dec. 1, 1988

CONTACT:

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Terry Stephan 312/353-0770

ILLINOIS

BACKGROUND ON HOMELESS YOUTH IN ILLINOIS**THE PROBLEM**

It is difficult to estimate the number of homeless youths in Illinois. Two recent (1985) studies found there were nearly 20,000 homeless youths (under 21) in Illinois, 10,000 of them in Chicago. The studies were conducted by the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and a task force commissioned by Gov. James R. Thompson.

The studies found that between 45 percent and 60 percent of the young people left home because they were abused or neglected. The governor's task force found that nearly 7,900 of the 20,000 homeless youths in Illinois were rejected by their parents. The reasons the parents rejected their children vary, but include alcoholism, mental illness, drugs or economic hardship.

Once on the street, these young people are often exploited and turn to delinquency, prostitution and drugs to survive. The governor's task force found that 9,000 youngsters were sexually exploited while on the street and over 7,000 became pregnant or are teen mothers. They are beaten by pimps, suffer from malnutrition and exposure, and turn to drugs and alcohol to escape their reality. AIDS has also become an increasing problem.

There are insufficient services available for these youths. The governor's task force found that services for the 18 to 20 year-old group are very limited because these young people are not old enough for adult shelters and too old for foster care. There is also a shortage of shelters and counseling services for those under 18.

PURPOSE OF HEARING

State and local officials as well as people who work with homeless youths will testify about services available in Illinois and what needs to be done in Illinois and across the nation to improve these services. Several homeless youths, who wish to remain anonymous, also will testify. A major focus of the hearing is to discuss how to help young people acquire skills to live on their own.

Simon will seek comment on a new \$5 million grant program for homeless youths. The Simon-authored program was included in the drug bill signed into law recently by President Reagan. The money is targeted for programs to help homeless youths between the ages of 16 and 21 who face special problems. Both public and private non-profit organizations may apply for the grants to provide shelter and services to homeless youths for a continuous period of up to 18 months. The goal of the program is to provide shelter and a variety of services such as education and vocational counseling and training in basic life skills.

CURRENT ILLINOIS SERVICES

Homeless youths in Illinois are provided services in several ways. If the youth is a ward of the state, he or she is eligible for state services and will be placed by the state in a foster home or group home. State officials hope to encourage family reunification or independent living.

If the child is not a ward of the state, he or she still has access to services by contacting local law enforcement agencies. Local police then contact one of 70 service providers throughout the state known as "1500 boards." The youth may also contact the "1500 board" directly. Illinois established the "1500 boards" in 1982 to provide services to needy youths. When the boards were first created, their mandate did not include serving homeless youths. However, the law has been expanded now to include these young people. Unfortunately, very few have taken advantage of these services.

In Chicago, there are an estimated 1,500 emergency shelter beds for 25,000 homeless adults. But there are only 30 emergency shelter beds for 4,000 youths under 18 years.

SENATOR PAUL SIMON'S**HOMELESS YOUTH AMENDMENT:****LANGUAGE ADOPTED AS AMENDMENT TO THE DRUG BILL**

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1 (E) in paragraphs (5) and (6) by striking "run-
2 away youth" each place it appears and inserting "run-
3 away and homeless youth".

4 (4) Section 314 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth
5 Act (42 U.S.C. 5714) is amended by striking "runaway
6 center" and inserting "runaway and homeless youth center".

7 (5) Section 317 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth
8 Act (42 U.S.C. 5715) is amended—

9 (A) by striking "runaway centers" and inserting
10 "runaway and homeless youth centers", and

11 (B) by striking "runaway youth" and inserting
12 "runaway and homeless youth".

13 (6) Section 318(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth
14 Act (42 U.S.C. 5716(a)) is amended by striking "acquisition
15 and".

16 **SEC. 7272. ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.**

17 The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C.
18 5701-5751) is amended—

19 (1) by amending the heading for part A to read as
20 follows:

21 "PART A—RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH GRANT
22 PROGRAM",

23 (2) by striking the headings for parts B and C,
24 and

1 (3) by inserting before the heading for section 317
2 the following:

3 "PART D—ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS".

4 SEC. 7273. AUTHORIZATION OF TRANSITIONAL LIVING
5 PROJECTS.

6 (a) ASSISTANCE TO POTENTIAL GRANTEEES.—Section
7 315 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C.
8 5714a) is amended—

9 (1) by inserting "and transitional living youth
10 projects" after "homeless youth centers",

11 (2) in paragraph (1) by inserting "or transitional
12 living youth project" after "homeless youth center",

13 (3) by inserting "or such project" after "such
14 center" each place it appears, and

15 (4) in paragraph (3) by inserting "and homeless"
16 after "runaway".

17 (b) LEASE OF SURPLUS FEDERAL FACILITIES.—Section
18 316 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C.
19 5714b) is amended—

20 (1) in the heading of such section by inserting "OR
21 AS TRANSITIONAL LIVING YOUTH SHELTER FACILI-
22 TIES" after "HOMELESS YOUTH CENTERS", and

23 (2) in subsection (a)—

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1 (A) by inserting "or as transitional living
2 youth shelter facilities" after "homeless youth
3 centers", and

4 (B) in paragraph (1) by inserting "or transi-
5 tional living youth project, as the case may be,
6 under this title" after "homeless youth center".

7 (c) REPORTS.—Section 317 of the Runaway and Home-
8 less Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5715) is amended—

9 (1) by inserting "(a)" after "SEC. 317.",

10 (2) by striking "this part" and inserting "part A",
11 and

12 (3) by adding at the end thereof the following:

13 "(b) The Secretary shall annually report to the Con-
14 gress on the status and accomplishments of the transitional
15 living youth projects which are funded under part B, with
16 particular attention to—

17 "(1) the number and characteristics of homeless
18 youth served by such projects;

19 "(2) describing the types of activities carried out
20 under such projects;

21 "(3) the effectiveness of such projects in alleviat-
22 ing the immediate problems of homeless youth;

23 "(4) the effectiveness of such projects in preparing
24 homeless youth for self sufficiency;

1 “(5) the effectiveness of such projects in helping
2 youth decide upon future education, employment, and
3 independent living; and

4 “(6) the ability of such projects to strengthen
5 family relationships, and encourage the resolution of
6 intra-family problems through counseling and the de-
7 velopment of self-sufficient living skills.”.

8 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
9 331 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C.
10 5751) is amended—

11 (1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as sub-
12 sections (c) and (d), respectively, and

13 (2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

14 “(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), to carry out the pur-
15 poses of part B of this title, there are authorized to be appro-
16 priated \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 1989 and such sums as
17 may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1990, 1991,
18 and 1992.

19 “(2) No funds may be appropriated to carry out part B
20 of this title for a fiscal year unless the aggregate amount
21 appropriated for such fiscal year to carry out part A of this
22 title exceeds \$26,900,000.”.

23 (e) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—The Runaway and
24 Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701-5751) is amended—

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1 (1) by inserting before the heading for section 315
2 the following:

3 "PART C—GENERAL PROVISIONS",
4 and

5 (2) by redesignating sections 315, 316, 317, 318,
6 321, and 331 as sections 341, 342, 361, 362, 363,
7 and 366, respectively.

8 (f) GRANTS FOR TRANSITIONAL LIVING YOUTH
9 PROJECTS.—The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42
10 U.S.C. 5701–5751) is amended by inserting after section 314
11 the following:

12 "PART B—TRANSITIONAL LIVING GRANT PROGRAM
13 "PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY FOR PROGRAM

14 "SEC. 321. (a) The Secretary is authorized to make
15 grants and to provide technical assistance to public and non-
16 profit private entities to establish and operate transitional
17 living youth projects for homeless youth.

18 "(b) For purposes of this part—

19 "(1) the term 'homeless youth' means any individ-
20 ual—

21 "(A) who is not less than 16 years of age
22 and not more than 21 years of age;

23 "(B) for whom it is not possible to live in a
24 safe environment with a relative; and

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1 “(C) who has no other safe alternative living
2 arrangement; and

3 “(2) the term ‘transitional living youth project’
4 means a project that provides shelter and services de-
5 signed to promote a transition to self-sufficient living
6 and to prevent long-term dependency on social serv-
7 ices.

8 “ELIGIBILITY

9 “SEC. 322. (a) To be eligible for assistance under this
10 part, an applicant shall propose to establish, strengthen, or
11 fund a transitional living youth project for homeless youth
12 and shall submit to the Secretary a plan in which such appli-
13 cant agrees, as part of such project—

14 “(1) to provide, directly or indirectly, shelter (such
15 as group homes, host family homes, and supervised
16 apartments) and services (including information and
17 counseling services in basic life skills, interpersonal
18 skill building, educational advancement, job attainment
19 skills, and mental and physical health care) to homeless
20 youth;

21 “(2) to provide such shelter and such services to
22 individual homeless youth throughout a continuous
23 period not to exceed 540 days;

24 “(3) to provide, directly or indirectly, on-site su-
25 pervision at each shelter facility that is not a family
26 home;

1 “(4) that such shelter facility used to carry out
2 such project shall have the capacity to accommodate
3 not more than 20 individuals (excluding staff);

4 “(5) to provide a number of staff sufficient to
5 ensure that all homeless youth participating in such
6 project receive adequate supervision and services;

7 “(6) to provide a written transitional living plan
8 to each youth based on an assessment of such youth's
9 needs, designed to help the transition from supervised
10 participation in such project to independent living or
11 another appropriate living arrangement;

12 “(7) to develop an adequate plan to ensure proper
13 referral of homeless youth to social service, law en-
14 forcement, educational, vocational, training, welfare,
15 legal service, and health care programs and to help in-
16 tegrate and coordinate such services for youths;

17 “(8) to provide for the establishment of outreach
18 programs designed to attract individuals who are eligi-
19 ble to participate in the project;

20 “(9) to submit to the Secretary an annual report
21 that includes information regarding the activities car-
22 ried out with funds under this part, the achievements
23 of the project under this part carried out by the appli-
24 cant and statistical summaries describing the number
25 and the characteristics of the homeless youth who par-

1 ticipate in such project in the year for which the report
2 is submitted;

3 “(10) to implement such accounting procedures
4 and fiscal control devices as the Secretary may require;

5 “(11) to submit to the Secretary an annual budget
6 that estimates the itemized costs to be incurred in the
7 year for which the applicant requests a grant under
8 this part;

9 “(12) to keep adequate statistical records profiling
10 homeless youth which it serves and not to disclose the
11 identity of individual homeless youth in reports or
12 other documents based on such statistical records;

13 “(13) not to disclose records maintained on indi-
14 vidual homeless youth without the consent of the indi-
15 vidual youth and parent or legal guardian to anyone
16 other than an agency compiling statistical records or a
17 government agency involved in the disposition of crimi-
18 nal charges against youth; and

19 “(14) to provide to the Secretary such other infor-
20 mation as the Secretary may reasonably require.

21 “(b) In selecting eligible applicants to receive grants
22 under this part, the Secretary shall give priority to entities
23 that have experience in providing to homeless youth shelter
24 and services of the types described in subsection (a)(1).”.

1 SEC. 7274. REPORTS.

2 Section 361 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act
3 (42 U.S.C. 5715), as so redesignated by section 7273(e)(2), is
4 amended by striking "The Secretary shall annually" and in-
5 serting "Not later than 180 days after the end of each fiscal
6 year, the Secretary shall".

7 SEC. 7275. NATIONAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM.

8 (a) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Sections 313 and 314
9 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5713-
10 5714) are redesignated as sections 316 and 317, respectively.

11 (b) AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS.—The Runaway
12 and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701-5751) is amended
13 by inserting after section 312 the following:

14 "GRANTS FOR A NATIONAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

15 "SEC. 313. (a) With funds reserved under subsection
16 (b), the Secretary shall make grants for a national communi-
17 cation system to assist runaway and homeless youth in com-
18 municating with their families and with service providers.

19 "(b) From funds appropriated to carry out this part and
20 after making the allocation required by section 366(a)(2), the
21 Secretary shall reserve—

22 "(1) for fiscal year 1989 not less than \$500,000;

23 "(2) for fiscal year 1990 not less than \$600,000;

24 and

25 "(3) for each of the fiscal years 1991 and 1992

26 not less than \$750,000;

The first panel is made up of Dr. Sid Mohn, Rev. Tom Behrens, Patricia Berg, Lonnetta Albright, and Katie Milton. If they will please come to the witness table. Ms. Milton is not here. If the four of you who are here will come, we will begin. These lights are a gentle reminder for all of our witnesses. We would like you to limit your remarks to 5 minutes if we could and then toss this open for discussion. We will hear from all of the members of the panel before we ask for questions.

The first is Dr. Sid Mohn, the chief executive officer of Travelers and Immigrants Aid. And I might add, I just saw Dr. Mohn yesterday in another connection where he is working with victims of torture who have undergone some very tragic experiences in other countries. I applaud your efforts and leadership in that area as well as this one.

Dr. Mohn, very pleased to have you here.

Dr. MOHN. Thank you, Senator Simon.

STATEMENT OF A PANEL CONSISTING OF DR. SID L. MOHN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, TRAVELERS & IMMIGRANTS AID; REV. TOM BEHRENS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NORTHSIDE ECUMENICAL NIGHT MINISTRY; PATRICIA BERG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAMS; LONNETTA ALBRIGHT, ADMINISTRATOR, AUNT MARTHA'S; KATIE R. MILTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNITY SHELTER

STATEMENT OF DR. SID L. MOHN

Dr. MOHN. On behalf of Travelers and Immigrants Aid, a 100-year-old agency serving the displaced in Chicago, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify before this subcommittee.

An estimated 1 to 2 million young people between the ages of 10 and 21 live on the streets in cities across this country. These young people represent all social and economic classes, all racial and ethnic groups.

For the most part, no one provides for the well-being of these youngsters without homes. The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services claims that only about 50 percent of these homeless young people will ever be successfully reunited with their families.

Young people are homeless today for many reasons. An overwhelming majority, estimated by recent literature to be between 50 and 75 percent, have fled their homes because of sexual abuse. Others have been the victims of physical or emotional abuse. And still others have been thrown out of their homes or even abandoned.

In Illinois, the Governor's Task Force on Homeless Youth has estimated that there are approximately 20,000 homeless young people throughout the State. And in Chicago, the Coalition for the Homeless estimates that there are about 10,000 homeless youngsters, some as young as 11 years old. Travelers and Immigrants Aid's Neon Street Center and Neon Street Dorms, both programs that help homeless youth, are responses to this issue.

Neon Street Center, established in 1986, provides safe refuge and food, daytime shelter, clothing and medical care for up to 75 young people each day. Neon Street Dorms is a residential program for homeless young people between the ages of 18 and 21. Perhaps the most critical component of both programs, though, is an emphasis

on teaching independent living skills, helping homeless youths prevent a lifelong dependency.

Our experience in working with homeless youths gives us insight on the situations that they face, and what we as a society must do about the problem.

Young people on the streets survive in constant peril. They are abused, victimized, subject to assault, exposure, poor health, inadequate health care and at grave risk of AIDS, death or permanent psychological damage. One writer recently described them as "posing more like predators, so they will appear less like prey."

But preyed upon they are. Once on the streets, homeless young people confront a myriad of physical and psychological dangers, compounding those they have already experienced in their homes. Recent reports suggests that one out of three homeless young people is lured into prostitution within 48 hours of being on the street. After 2 weeks, about 75 percent of homeless young people survive by sexual victimization.

Homeless young people often evidence psychological difficulties ranging from anti-social behavior, depression, low self-esteem to delinquency and suicide attempts, behaviors which increase their vulnerability. Many become involved in the using and selling of drugs in order to escape or to survive. A Los Angeles County study states that if a youth has not resolved his or her homeless situation within 1 year, their life expectancy is no more than 5 to 7 years beyond that point.

The educational needs of homeless young people are just as alarming. At Neon Street Center we found that only about 10 to 15 percent of the young people have completed high school or received a general education development certificate; 35 percent have a 9th to 10th grade education; about 30 percent have a 5th to 8th grade education; the remainder, about 10 to 15 percent have less than a 5th grade education.

Despite these problems, it is estimated that only about 20 percent of homeless young people will seek out the assistance of established child welfare agencies. The reasons why are many, but they generally include a distrust of adults and authority figures, brought about by previous home and street experience; a fear of being returned to an abusive family, group or foster care situation; a fear of discovery of possibly illegal activities; or a fear of becoming involved in what is viewed as a complex and confusing service delivery system.

Yet, it is imperative that we reach these young people now, providing them with support and constructive alternatives for life. That is why your leadership and actions are so vital.

These forgotten young people represent our nation's future.

Mr. SIMON. If you want to just summarize the balance of your statement, despite that red light go ahead, Dr. Mohn.

Dr. MOHN. We believe that the Federal Government must show leadership by addressing these problems. Organizations such as those represented here can and do help; but the problem of youth homelessness is beyond the capacity of local governments and the private sector alone.

The Federal Government must identify homeless young people as a special population, requiring protective laws and specialized services.

We believe that street kids can be reached, they can be helped. They can turn into self-sufficient adults. The recent amendment to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act that provides \$5 million in funding for community based groups is a good beginning, but only that.

We urge your continued leadership to expand and extend beyond that beginning. Thank you.

Mr. SIMON. I thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Sid L. Mohn follows:]



**Travelers &
Immigrants Aid**
Helping People in Transition

Travelers & Immigrants Aid
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327 South LaSalle Street
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312/435-4500

**TESTIMONY
to the**

**Subcommittee on the Constitution
U. S. Senate Judiciary Committee**

December 1, 1988

**Rev. Dr. Sid L. Mohn
Chief Executive Officer
Travelers & Immigrants Aid**

On behalf of Travelers & Immigrants Aid of Chicago, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to make a statement before this Subcommittee on the needs of homeless youth.

An estimated one million to two million young people between the ages of 10 and 21 live on the streets in cities across this nation. These young people represent all social and economic classes, all racial and ethnic groups.

For the most part, no one provides for the well-being of these youngsters without homes. They survive--when they survive--outside the parameters of our existing child welfare system. The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services says that only about 50 percent of these homeless young people will ever be successfully reunited with their families.

Young people are homeless today for many reasons. An overwhelmingly majority, estimated by recent literature to be

between 50 and 75 percent, have fled their homes because of sexual abuse. Others have been the victims of physical or emotional abuse. And still others have been thrown out of their homes or abandoned--for reasons ranging from family conflict, to the death of a parent or guardian; or because their families simply cannot care for them financially.

In Illinois, the Governor's Task Force on Homeless Youth has estimated that there are about 20,000 homeless young people throughout the state. In Chicago, the Coalition for the Homeless estimates that there are about ten thousand homeless youngsters--some as young as eleven years old. Travelers & Immigrants Aid is one of only a few organizations in Chicago offering specialized services to homeless young people, and we subscribe to an "open door" policy. We will not turn away a child or adolescent who has no home.

Travelers & Immigrants Aid has a long history of working with the homeless and displaced. Our Neon Street Center and Neon Street Dorms--both programs that help homeless youth--are national models.

Neon Street Center, established in 1986, provides safe refuge--and food, daytime shelter, clothing, and medical care to up to 75 young people each day. Neon Street Dorms is a residential program for homeless young people between the ages of 18 and 21.

Perhaps the most critical component of both programs, though, is our emphasis on teaching independent living skills--helping homeless youths prevent a lifelong dependency.

Our experience in working with homeless youths gives us insight on the situations that they face, and what we as a society must do about the problem.

Young people on the streets survive in constant peril. They are abused, victimized, subject to assault, exposure, poor health and inadequate health care, and at grave risk of AIDS, death, or permanent psychological damage. Yet, on the street they present a hardened, and "street smart" facade. One writer recently described them as "posing more like predators, so they will appear less like prey."

But preyed upon they are. Once on the streets, homeless young people confront a myriad of physical and psychological dangers, compounding those they have already experienced at home. Recent reports suggest that one out of three homeless young people is lured into prostitution within 48 hours of being on the street. After two weeks, about 75 percent of homeless young people survive by sexual victimization.

Homeless young people often evidence psychological difficulties ranging from anti-social behavior, depression, and low self-

esteem to delinquency and suicide attempts--behaviors which increase their vulnerability. Many get involved in the using and selling of drugs in order to escape or to survive. Indeed, a Los Angeles County study states that if a youth has not resolved his or her homeless situation within one year, their life expectancy is no more than five to seven years beyond that point.

And the educational needs of homeless young people are just as alarming. Many lack the most rudimentary skills. At Neon Street Center, we've found that only about 10 to 15 percent of the young people have completed high school or received a general education development certificate; 35 percent have a 9th to 10th grade education; about 30 percent have a 5th to 8th grade education; the remainder--approximately 10 to 15 percent--have less than a fifth grade education.

Despite these problems, it is estimated that only about 20 percent of homeless young people will seek out the assistance of established child welfare agencies. The reasons why are many, but they generally include a distrust of adults and authority figures, brought about by previous home and street experiences; a fear of being returned to an abusive family, group, or foster care situation; a fear of discovery of possibly illegal activities; or a fear of becoming involved in what is viewed as a complex and confusing service delivery system.

Yet, it is imperative that we reach these young people now, providing them with support and constructive alternatives for life. That is why your leadership and actions are so vital.

These forgotten young people represent our nation's future. Their alienation from society threatens their untapped potential --a resource that is so critical to our collective future.

The federal government must show leadership by addressing the problems of these young people, and bringing them under the protection of our society. Organizations like Travelers & Immigrants Aid can, and do help; but the problem of youth homelessness is beyond the capacity of local governments and the private sector alone. The problem demands a coordinated response--one that involves both the public and private sectors--guided by the leadership and resources of the federal government.

Neon Street Center has already reached approximately 475 young people, redirecting the lives of many. Of those who participate in Neon Street in a year's time, 76 percent are now positively engaged in activities leading to self-reliance; these activities include working at full- or part-time jobs, enrollment in alternative schools, and participation in remedial education, counseling, and support groups offered by the Center.

But programs like Neon Street need funding to ensure their

continuation. And new dollars must be found to extend similar services to the unserved youth of our nation.

But more than money is needed. We also need our national leaders to understand and respond with sensitivity to the problems that are faced by the homeless in general, and the homeless young, in particular.

The federal government must identify homeless young people as a special population, requiring protective laws and specialized services. Leadership and funding from Washington must require state and local governments to provide overnight shelter and transitional housing; medical and mental health services; vocational and independent living skills training; and emergency outreach services for homeless youth.

The experience of Travelers & Immigrants Aid--and that of other organizations assisting homeless young people--proves that "street kids" can be reached. They can be helped. They can grow and develop the skills necessary for self-sufficient adult lives. Responsible legislative initiatives like the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Act, and the recent amendment to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act that provides \$5 million in funding for community-based groups to provide shelter and basic life skills, are a beginning.

I urge you to continue your work on behalf of our nation's homeless children--our nation's future.

Thank you. I am available for any specific questions that you may have.

Mr. SIMON. Rev. Tom Behrens, executive director of the North-side Ecumenical Night Ministry. Mr. Behrens, we welcome you here.

STATEMENT OF REV. TOM BEHRENS

Reverend BEHRENS. Thank you very much. I just want to commend you for taking leadership in this. I think that has been something that is sorely lacking in the country at this time in our history, is that the public community, the Government has not taken a leadership in this that they need to and should.

The National Academy of Science estimates that there are at least 100,000 homeless youth on any given night in the United States. The vast majority of these are involved in prostitution for survival, substance abuse to cope with their dilemma, and greatly at risk to death due to violence, disease, and suicide. If in fact, they do not end up dead, they will die a spiritual death resulting in their loss of talents and creativity to us and become a burden and a drain on our society.

The causes of youth homelessness, I believe, are dramatically different than the causes of homelessness among adults and among families. And I think this is an important point to note. While there certainly are a percentage of youth who are homeless for some of those same reasons, the vast majority of them are homeless because of the breakdown of the family. Family is breaking down and that, I think, is a major cause to homelessness. Families are breaking down because of the stresses that are experienced in families; stresses due to death of a significant person; stresses due to substance abuse, whether alcohol or drugs; stress due to damage to the kids whether by physical, sexual, or emotional abuses.

A first step that we must take in developing a plan for solving homelessness among youth is to understand that it exists as a unique population and unique problem. It cannot be addressed in the same way that we address homelessness among adults and homelessness among families. They are a separate category and we need to accept that.

A homeless youth now cannot walk into a shelter for homeless adults. If they do they, by law, at least in this State at this point in time, be turned away. That is a tragedy that they will end up then staying on the street or in other dangerous kinds of situations. I feel we have not yet done this to address it, and that society and government have ignored this population expecting that existing programming should serve them. It does not. We need to develop programming that reaches this population that earns their trust and self confidence, that provides for basic human needs, and prepares them to either reenter the system of care, or family, or prepares them for transitional living and independent living.

Homeless youth are society's gnawing failure. One of the few luxuries though we need to recognize in dealing with homeless youth is the luxury that youth have in the fact that they, for the first time or maybe only time in their lives, have a sense of having a control over their life. They can stay up late at night; they do not have the discipline involved in institutions or in families; and they

feel that this is something they want to maintain. And if we are to reach them we must understand that and respect that.

I think another aspect we must understand is that these are not bad kids. They may make bad decisions in their life, but they are not bad kids. They are in a bad situation.

We must go out and find them, for they have given up on us. We must go out onto the streets along their pathways into the voids where they exist and let them know we care. We must earn their trust so they will give us another chance at providing for them. Our outreach might also consist of drop-in centers with limited expectations of the youth that provide for their basic needs. We need to have emergency overnight shelters that allow them to choose a place to sleep and not be forced into prostitution to get out of the cold. They need to have a place to get a shower, some food, and if they want some counseling, even if they are not ready to give up their lifestyle, to get that counseling, and they need to have options that allow them to come back to us if and when they are ready, options that respect them and indicate they are a value and cared for.

We need to have programs that once a youth trusts us again allows them to begin to deal with their issues. We need to have a continuum of care and opportunities, that would include independent living programs and programs leading to that and transitional programs.

Programming for homeless youth needs to be viewed as a continuum of care, helping such youth move toward adulthood. An aspect of youth homelessness, I think that we forget and I will try and be brief here, is that were these kids not homeless they would be in a family situation receiving exceptional amount of care and support. Homelessness for youth occurs at a time when they develop mentally and are trying to integrate their experience of who they have been through their early years, the values they have been taught, with the visions they have for a future. If they are homeless that process is aborted and emotionally they are stunted in their development.

I encourage all parties to work together, government, private, and community. You see from the rest of my testimony I have summarized some of the statements, what I think are important. I won't go over this again, but let me just conclude.

What I think perhaps is the most important point of our discussion is that we must examine our own values, be critical about our response or lack of response, and finally state that all the youth of our country are important, and that we will not leave any out in the cold. The street is a spiritual and physical place of death for our youth. If we don't act then all the lip service to how we value youth is a lie. We can only say we value our children's youth if we act to save them.

Thank you.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you very much, Reverend Behrens.

[The prepared statement of Thomas Behrens follows:]

STATEMENT TO THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

by Thomas Behrens, Chair of the Youth Committee of the
Chicago Coalition of the Homeless
and Executive Director of the
Northside Ecumenical Night Ministry/Exodus Homes

December 1, 1988

The National Academy of Sciences estimates that there are at least 100,000 youth homeless on any given night in the United States of America. The vast majority of these are involved in prostitution for survival, substance abuse to cope with their dilemma, and greatly at risk to death due to violence, disease, and suicide. If they do not end up dead, they die a spiritual death resulting in their loss of talents and creativity, and become a burden and drain to society.

The causes of youth homelessness, I believe, are dramatically different than the causes of homelessness among adults and among families. While there certainly are a percentage of youth who are homeless due to the inadequacy of the mental health care system and the decline in the supply of low income homes and single room occupancy hotels--youth are largely homeless due to the breakdown of the family. Thus in looking for solutions to homelessness among youth we cannot simply look to create and fund programs, but we must more importantly look at the values we as a country hold and address the issues involved in supporting families and their abilities to cope with today's pressures and stresses.

Youth who are homeless come predominantly from families that have broken down due to stresses they have not been able to cope with. These include stresses from death of a significant family member, divorce in the family, drug or alcohol abuse by someone in the family, and damage to the youth due to physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Whatever causes these to be stressful issues in families is therefore also contributing factors including poverty, inadequate training for parenthood, and the proliferation of alcohol and drugs.

A first step to developing a plan for solving homelessness among youth is to understand that it exists as a unique population and problem. These youth cannot adequately be lumped in with other categories of youth. These are youth who are on their own and have not been able to be served by the traditional family and youth serving agencies. We must also understand that youth homelessness is different than adult and family homelessness. We are talking about youth who are alone and who came to be homeless due to family and service (traditional social service) breakdown.

In recognizing the uniqueness of the population we can then develop an adequate definition of homeless youth. In recognizing their uniqueness we can understand how to respond to them.

I feel we have not yet done this, and that society and government have

ignored this population expecting that existing programing should serve them. It does not. We need to develop programing that reaches the population, that earns their trust and confidence, that provides for basic human needs, and prepares them to either re-enter the system of care or family, or prepares them for transitional living and independent living.

Homeless youth are societies gnawing failure. To see a homeless youth is to see the family destroyed and society as falling apart. We need to admit our failures and work to do better. We must acknowledge this and reach out to these youth as important. We must say we care. To do this we must go out, find our children and be present with them letting them know they are of value and that we want them back.

One of the few luxuries for these youth is that they have control over their own lives. They can decide to stay up all night, abuse alcohol and drugs, have a sexual life, have money, and make their own decisions whether it is good or bad. These are not bad kids, but without having developed fully emotionally and experientially, they do make bad decisions. But in reaching out to them, we cannot look to bring them back in by taking away this luxury of control. They must be offered good choices and not squeezed into highly defined programs.

We must go out and find them, for they have given up on us. We must go out onto the streets, along their pathways, into the voids where they exist and let them know we care. We must earn their trust so that they will give us another chance at providing for them. Our outreach might also consist of drop-in centers with limited expectations that provide for basic needs. We need to have emergency overnight shelters that allow them to choose a place to sleep and not be forced into prostitution to get out of the cold. They need to have a place to get a shower, some food, and if they want some counseling even if they are not ready to give up life on the street. They need to have options that allow them to come back if and when they are ready. Options that respect them and indicate they are of value and are cared for.

We need to have programs that once a youth trusts us again, he or she can begin to deal with the issues causing their homelessness, whether family or failed youth service system. We need to be able to move from emergency shelter relief to transitional living programs. These need to be developed so they provide a continuum of care and opportunities. Such transitional program must provide for comprehensive services that train and prepare youth for independence.

We need to develop independent living programs for youth who are ready to move towards independence, but need support for those times that are difficult, or for those times when they need someone to fall back on.

Programing for homeless youth needs to be viewed as a continuum of care, helping such youth take the steps to adulthood. An aspect of homelessness among youth that we often forget, is that were these kids not homeless and remained in an intact family, they would hopefully have support that helped train them for independence and responsibility. If they had an intact family, they would have a base upon which to fall in times of emergency or stress.

The adolescent years are a crucial development step in the process of growing up. The teen years are the time in which all the experience of our early years--values, training, self-image, and so forth--come together with our personal hopes and visions for life. It is a time when with the support of family and community institutions, we can experiment with who we are without the pressures of surviving. This is a natural process that today goes beyond the teen years for many. It is, however, a crucial process. For homeless youth, this process, this relaxed time is lost as these youth must do what is necessary to survive. This important step in their development is skipped, and they are emotionally stunted. Too often this loss of an important developmental stage becomes a spiritual and emotional death that prevents such a person from ever actualizing themselves.

Lastly, to address the problems of homeless youth we need to encourage all parties to work together. Local government, private youth serving agencies, and community groups--whether neighborhood churches or others.

There are far too many issues to deal with, so allow me to make a recommendation and outline some crucial points to address.

I recommend that you sponsor a national conference for legislators, federal and state, to learn about the issues of homeless youth. At this we need to do many things, including the following:

- 1.) Define homelessness among youth.
- 2.) Recognize that they are a unique population, different from other youth and other homeless persons.
- 3.) Recognize that services different from the ones now existing need to be developed.
- 4.) Develop programing to reach out and meet these youth where they are; not expecting them to come in on their own.
- 5.) Provide for basic human needs of food, shelter, and medical attention.
- 6.) Develop a continuum of programing from emergency needs to transitional needs to independent living needs.
- 7.) Encourage the networking of government and private agencies.
- 8.) Encourage and enable communities through private institutions--such as the church--to become involved in developing support for families and youth.

Perhaps most important in our discussion, however, is that we must examine our own values, be critical about our responses or lack of responses, and finally state that all the youth of our country are important - and that we will not leave any out in the cold. The street is spiritual and physical death for our homeless youth. If we don't act, then all the lip service to how we value youth is a lie. We can only say we value our nation's children if we act to save them.

Mr. SIMON. Patricia Berg, the executive director of the Transitional Living Programs. Very happy to have you here.

STATEMENT OF PATRICIA BERG

Ms. BERG. Thank you. Is the red light on?

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of an issue which I believe is of very serious importance to people in Chicago, and eventually will be to the country as a whole.

My name is Patricia Berg and I am the executive director of a small community-based child welfare agency in Chicago called Transitional Living Programs.

TLP has been providing services to homeless young people since 1983, sometime before the issue came to the light of the media and other public officials. In those early days, our organization provided emergency shelter and foster homes for young people who had no place else to go. From those youth, over the years we have learned many terrifying and saddening things. As a result, beginning in January 1985, TLP began the first street work program targeting young males and females on the street involved in commercial prostitution and pornography. Our attempt was to try to get these young people to move off of the streets into a safer environment and from those young people we learned about other youth on the streets who were living in abandoned cars and who found themselves in even worse situations. As a result, we began, in 1986 the first residential program in Chicago for transitioning homeless young people into mainstream America and self-sufficiency.

Over the last 5 years our small organization has grown from a budget of \$100,000 to a little over \$1 million, but those dollars are reflective of the increasing number of young people that we have seen. For in 1983, we serviced 50 young people, last fiscal year we serviced over 3,500. The dramatic increase in services is not because we are particularly adept at marketing, but rather because we are beginning to meet a need that has existed for some time and that is finally being recognized on a national level.

As Reverend Mohn said earlier, over 14,000 young people leave home without parental permission in Chicago every year. The Chicago Police Department estimates that there are anywhere from 3,000 to 4,000 young people who are involved in commercial prostitution on Chicago streets. In addition, the Governor's task force on youth homelessness in 1985 estimated conservatively that there were at least 10,000 youth in Chicago who were without homes. The magnitude of the problem, however, in my mind, seems not so much the issue. There would be far too many young people whom we might call homeless if there was only one. For it is their stories that tell the tale.

Karen was 12 years old when we first found her. She was living in a back alley in Uptown with two dogs. She had been there for approximately 6 months, even though over the course of her young life she had been removed from her mother's home on at least four different occasions. Her mother was an alcoholic and had been terribly abusive to her.

Karen, however, loved her mother and in the reasoning that only a child can have, she wanted to stay on the streets because she

knew that if she went home they would take her away from her mother.

Tim was 16 when another young person on the street brought him to our agency. He had been living in an abandoned car in Uptown for about 4 months. His mother had been hospitalized in a mental institution, yet another time. And coming from the South and having no relatives, Tim stayed in their apartment until the lights were turned off, the gas turned off, and the landlord threw him out. Knowing nowhere else to turn, he went to the streets. At least that way he could visit his mother on a regular basis.

Faye was close to 18 when she came to us. She had been hospitalized in a psychiatric facility four times prior to her 16th birthday. As an early teenager, her father had tied her up, beat her, sodomized her, and when she passed out threw water on her to wake her up so that he could start to do it all over again. She had been released from the local psychiatric facility and with no place else to go called us for assistance.

There are hundreds and hundreds of these stories. Each of the people I have just mentioned is a very real person and there are more horrors to think of and talk about than I might ever be able to mention within the 5-minute span of time. What you want to know are causes. They are simple: poverty; ignorance; lack of a family based social policy; no safety net for people; categorized services based on the most pressing illness or hot topic of the time; lack of affordable housing in decent neighborhoods; and a poor educational system so that youth have no basic skills and more importantly no place to go, no hope for their dreams, no place in society to earn a decent living.

Much needs to be done to improve this situation. The start happens to be the introduction of the legislation which you, Senator, have just proposed, but by itself, it will do little to stem the tide of the increasing thousand of percentiles by which organizations such as mine service a population which shows no signs of diminishing.

I would suggest a couple of things need to be placed on the social agenda over the next decade. They are fairly simple, though not easy to accomplish. The first is the recognition of the 16- to 21-year-old population as one in special need. The particular population now finds itself in a big hole as far as services are concerned, too old for children services and yet often too young or inappropriate for adult services. We have an opportunity to impact these young people in significant ways so that they can go on to become full fledged members of our society. Our failure to respond to them in significant ways, at this juncture, will however, almost virtually guarantee their permanent homelessness, incarceration or death.

We need to have affordable housing and a commitment from the Federal Government to provide people with a decent and safe place to live.

We need to recognize the serious alteration in our economy as a movement from the manufacturing sector to the service sector. As such, it is my belief that we need to revamp the JTPA Program, targeting those most in need and targeting training programs to increase basic skill levels so that those most in need can enter the service economy we now find.

We need to make education a national priority once again, so that we can be proud of our educational system not ashamed.

We need to understand that intervention efforts at the level that we now find these young people are costly. If we had a family policy that supported families in need, and that valued early intervention, oftentimes the abuse and family disintegration would not lead to ejection by family members of the young people in the first place.

Last, we need to reform welfare once again. Our culture still has a punitive attitude toward those people who are unable or are incapable of pulling their own weight. We need to understand that some people may need a little support for a long time. Welfare programs that punish families and promote the "you have to do this or we won't let you eat mentality" are only destined to fail in the long run.

We appreciate very much, Senator, that you have reached out to the homeless youth population by providing additional resources and programs that will meet their basic needs, but we have a basic value problem here. A judge advocate from Madagascar visited our agency not too long ago and began to explain their homeless youth population, much like the problem in India and Brazil. When I began to explain about our problem, she looked at me with tears in her eyes and in broken English said, "But this is America. This is the richest country in the world. It shouldn't happen here."

There is nothing else for me to say. Thank you.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, very very much for your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Patricia G. Berg follows:]

Testimony, for The Sub-Committee on the Constitution
of the Senate Judiciary Committee on the Issue of Homeless Youth

Submitted by: Patricia G. Berg
Executive Director
Transitional Living Programs, Inc.
Chicago, Illinois

Thank you Senator Simon for the opportunity to testify on an issue of serious importance to the people of Chicago and to the Country as a whole. My name is Patricia Berg, and I am the Executive Director of a small, community-based child welfare agency in Chicago called Transitional Living Programs.

TLP has been providing services to homeless young people since 1983, long before the issue came to the light of the media and "hot". In those early days, our organization provided emergency shelter in foster homes for young people who had no place else to go. From those youth, over the years we have learned many terrifying and saddening things. As a result, beginning in January of 1985, TLP began the first outreach program targeting young males and females on the street involved in commercial prostitution and pornography. From those youth, we began to serve others living on the streets involved in all sorts of activities in order that they might survive. As a result, we began, in 1986 the first residential program in Chicago for transitioning homeless young people into mainstream America and self-sufficiency.

Over the last five years our small organization has grown from a budget of \$100,000.00 to a budget of over a \$1,000,000.00 but those dollars are simply reflective of the increasing numbers of young people that we have seen. For in 1983, if TLP provided services to 50 young people I would be surprised. Last fiscal year, our organization serviced over 3500. The dramatic increase in services is not because we are particularly adept at marketing, but rather because we are beginning to meet a need that has existed for some time and that is finally being recognized on a national level.

Over 14,00 young people leave home without parental permission in Chicago every year. The Chicago Police Department estimates that there are anywhere from 3,000 to 4,000 young people who are involved in commercial prostitution on Chicago's streets. In addition, a Governor's Task Force Report on Youth Homelessness, in 1985, estimated conservatively that there were at least 10,000 youth in Chicago who were without homes. The magnitude of problem, however, in my mind, seems not to be the issue. There would be far too many young people whom we might call homeless if there was only one. For it is their stories that tell the tale.

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occasions. Her mother was an alcoholic and had been terribly abusive to Karen.

Karen, however, loved her mother and in the reasoning that only a child could have, she wanted to stay on the street because she knew that if she went home, "they would take me away from my mother".

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There are hundreds and hundreds of these stories. Each of the people that I have just mentioned is a very real person and there are more horrors to think of and talk about than I might ever be able to mention within a five minute span of time. What you want to know about are causes. They are very simple: poverty, ignorance, lack of a family based social policy; no safety net for people; categorized services based on the most pressing illness or hot topic of the time; lack of affordable housing in decent neighborhoods; and a poor educational system so that youth have no basic skills and more importantly no place to go, no hope for their dreams, no place in society to earn a decent living.

Much needs to be done to improve this situation. The start happens to be the introduction of the legislation which you Senator have just proposed but by itself, it will do little to stem the tide of the increasing thousand of percentiles by which organizations such as mine service a population which shows no signs of diminishing.

I would suggest a couple of things needs to be placed on a social agenda over the next decade. They are fairly simple though not easy to accomplish. The first is the recognition of the 16-21 year old age as a population in special need. The particular population now finds itself in a big hole as far as services are concerned - too old for children services and yet often too young or inappropriate for adult services. We have an opportunity to impact these young people in significant ways so they can go on to become full fledged members of our society. Our failure to respond to them in significant ways, at this juncture, will almost virtually guarantee their permanent homelessness,

incarceration, or death.

- * We need to have affordable housing and a commitment from the federal government to provide people with a decent and safe place to live.
- * We need to recognize the serious alteration in our economy as a movement from the manufacturing sector to the service sector. As such, it is my belief that we need to revamp the JTPA Program, targeting those most in need and targeting training programs to increase basic skill levels so that those most in need can enter the service economy as we now find.
- * We need to make education a national priority once again so that we can be proud of our educational system not ashamed.
- * We need to understand that intervention efforts at the level that we now find these young people are costly. If we had a family policy that supported families in need, and that valued early intervention, often times the abuse, and the family disintegration would not lead to ejection by family members of the young people in the first place.
- * Last, we need to reform welfare once again. Our culture still has a punitive attitude towards those people who are unable or incapable of pulling their full weight. We need to understand that some people may need a little support for a long time. Welfare programs that punish families and promote the "you have to do this or we won't let you eat mentality" are only destined to fail in the long run.

We appreciate Senator that you have reached out to the homeless youth population by providing additional resources and programs that will meet their needs all the way from emergency shelter, to independent living, to training, literacy and employment. But we have a basic value problem here. A judge advocate from Madagascar visited our agency not too long ago and began to explain their homeless youth problem, much like the problem in India and Brazil. When I began to explain our problem to her, she looked at me with tears in her eyes and in broken English said "but this is America--this is the richest country in the world. This shouldn't happen here".

There is nothing else for me to say.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Lonnetta Albright, the administrator of Aunt Martha's. Very happy to have you with us, Ms. Albright.

STATEMENT OF LONNETTA ALBRIGHT

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you, Senator Simon.

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you some of the experiences that we have had over the past 3 years in serving this population of young people.

Aunt Martha's is a 15-year-old community based organization that operates in the south suburbs and Cook County, as well as Will and Kankakee Counties, providing comprehensive services to young people and their families.

Over the past 3 years we have operated two independent living programs for homeless young people between the ages of 16 and 21. One of the programs is located in southern Cook County and the other is located in Joliet, that is in Will County.

Since we opened our doors and began these programs, we serve approximately 100 youth each year, providing shelter, independent living services, groups, employment training and job development, job placement assistance, drug and alcohol treatment and outpatient groups for children of alcoholics, adult children of alcoholics, emergency assistance, medical assistance, et cetera. When we underwent this effort little did we know that we would be faced with a nonsympathetic community who viewed shelters as facilities for the mentally ill, drug abusers, and criminals. Little did we know that the young people that we would be coming into contact would have problems that were so diversified.

We purchased furniture, computers, microwaves, food, et cetera, and thought if we provided a safe home that young people would then be motivated to learn the skills that were necessary for them to become self-sufficient. Well, since its inception we have made many revisions to our program.

We have discovered that we have to be flexible to meet the needs of this changing population. We found out that even though we targeted a specific geographic area, with limited dollars, there were young people in Chicago and other areas that we do not specifically serve that were contacting us for these services.

We found that some of our 18 to 21 year olds had experienced periodic stays in adult shelters that seemed to condone the homeless lifestyle since there were no other supportive services that were necessary for them to become self-sufficient. Ninety to 95 percent of the young people that come to us are unemployed and maybe 30 or 40 percent of those young people do have some previous work experience.

Most of our 18 year olds do not have their high schools diplomas, and about 65 percent of those in the population are interested in enrolling in a GED program, do not know how to access those type of services, et cetera.

Most of the over 18-year-old population which in our experience is the most critical population that we work with, since there are no medical services for these young people, many of them don't have insurance to cover the medical cost, et cetera.

These youth are not looking for handouts. They are responding. They are grateful and happy for the opportunities that we are presenting to them, and we had to ask ourselves and be realistic how many of us were independent when we were 18 and 19 years old.

Based on our experience we contend that the presence of one or more of the following service indicators of homelessness: lack of resources and support systems; lack of skills; lack of employment; lack of independence; lack of confidence and self-worth; and inappropriate attitudes.

Although they face numerous obstacles, the youth that we have served have exhibited a high success rate when we compare where they have come from to where they are when they leave our program. Our positive termination rate is about 70 percent, in other words, most of the young people that leave us leave us with employment and permanent housing, and a knowledge of how to maintain their independence and self-sufficiency. They have the knowledge of how to tap into resources that they may need from time to time.

The problems that we face in serving these young people is that there is a lack of employment opportunities, and employment training for these young people. There is a lack of affordable housing, even when they have a job and are ready to go out on their own, and we are helping them with their security deposits, et cetera, there are no landlords that are willing to rent to them. Lack of medical assistance, not enough programs to meet their needs, and programs such as ours that started out 3 years ago as a demonstration program, and a commitment from us as the service providers to not consistently start a demonstration program and then when the next initiative comes up we start another demonstration program. But a commitment to work with these young people.

I will conclude by saying that with the 16- to 21-year-old population we have found that the 18—there are really two populations within that age group. The 18- to 21-year-old population is the most critical group that we work with since they are very few resources, there are no systems that serve them, no one responsible for them. That is the population that we work with the hardest.

Thank you.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you very, very much, Ms. Albright.

[The prepared statement of Lonneta Albright follows:]

STATEMENT BY: Lonneta Albright, Administrator, Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you my experiences in serving homeless young people.

For the past three years I have run two independent living programs for youth between the ages of 16 and 21. In 1986 we opened our independent living home with a lot of enthusiasm and high hopes of turning lives around and teaching young adults how to take care of themselves.

Little did we know that we would be faced with a non-sympathetic community who viewed shelters as facilities for the mentally ill, drug abusers and criminals; little did we know that the young people and their problems were so diverse. We purchased furniture, computers, microwaves, food, etc. and thought that if we provided a safe home and accessible services that the young people would become overnight successes. Well, since its inception our program has made many revisions.

We found out that even though we targeted a specific geographic area, there were many more homeless young people needing our help. Additionally, we discovered that their maturity levels matched our own when we were teenagers, still dependent on our families, afraid to be on our own.

We found out that some of our 18-21 year olds had experienced cyclical stays in adult shelters that seemed to condone the homeless lifestyle and that we needed to do so much more for these young people who were without support and resources to become self-sufficient.

Today I am proud to say that our program and its staff had the foresight to be flexible enough to deal with the many needs of this population. What began as a demonstration project is now a tried and proven model for replication.

Based on our own experiences we contend that the presence of one or more of the following serve as indicators of homelessness.

- a. Lack of resources/support systems
- b. Lack of skills (eg. household survival, lack of structure or ability to live within structure)
- c. Lack of (adequate) employment
- d. Lack of independence (emancipation)
- e. Lack of confidence/self-worth
- f. Inappropriate attitude

Some of the problems that we have encountered in addressing these needs can be linked directly to the community, both public and private, and their lack of awareness and support of programs to serve this population.

All of our eligible clients were homeless due to a lack of resources. Along with not having physical facilities for housing, they also lacked the finances to obtain any that might have been available. Equally important, we have observed that they were without basic inner resources, ie. motivation, maturity, etc. that could have possibly circumvented their homelessness. 100% of the clients had no viable alternatives for housing at the time of referral.

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The lack of affordable housing is a major obstacle in successfully transitioning clients to independence. Coordinating a roommate situation is difficult because everyone leaves at different times. There is difficulty locating landlords willing to rent to them as well. Concomitant with housing problems, viable employment resources are sorely lacking. This is not a young person's problem solely, but there is a high unemployment rate among our targeted population.

Public assistance is virtually unavailable to single, non-parenting young adults. Food stamps, medical cards, and/or general assistance could help in their survival, but those who receive them are rare exceptions. The goal is not to foster dependence, but the reality is that many of our client population needs assistance from wherever it can be found.

The requirements of most bureaucracies are unrealistic for a homeless person. In other words, in order for a person to apply for some services, they need proof of residence, identification, past work history, etc. Most of these young people come to us without birth certificates or any other form of identification and, of course, there is no residence to prove.

What can Congress do to address this problem?

1. Support legislation that would increase availability of affordable housing for young adults.
2. Develop more flexible governmental systems to respond to needs of this population.
3. Encourage the private sector to support and participate in programs that will train and employ this population.
4. Make appropriate public aid services accessible to homeless youth without dependents, specifically medical care.
5. Development of vocational training, counseling and independent living programs.
6. Provision of additional dollars to follow through on your previous commitment to serve this youth population. We have demonstrated that there are greater numbers of these youth now being served.
7. Identify funds that would establish independent living programs that provide shelter as well as supportive services that would deal directly with the underlying skills necessary for self-sufficiency.

Don't misunderstand me, the kids we have served are not looking for handouts. They need and respond to programs that provide opportunities to become independent.

I could go on for hours about this topic, but with time restraints I would like to leave you with the idea of flexibility in services to this ever changing population.

Mr. SIMON. We are pleased to have Ms. Katie Milton, the executive director of Unity Shelter. Pleased to have you with us, Ms. Milton.

STATEMENT OF KATIE R. MILTON

Ms. MILTON. Thank you so very much, Senator.

Good morning. I am Katie Milton. I am going to read mine. I guess the others sort of talked their's through, but thanks anyway.

I am executive director for Unity Shelter. Unity is a 5-year-old nonprofit organization that provides shelter for homeless males and developmentally disabled males, 18 to 25 years of age. On that site, we provide the shelter, the food, clothing, programs, money management, many programs to help that population to get back into the mainstream of society.

For fiscal year 1987-88 during an 11-month period, Unity turned away 274 clients. For the same period we served 104 clients with 6 percent being age 17, and the reason that number is not higher, we are not able to take the 17 year olds. With 51 percent being age 18 to 21, and 43 percent between the ages of 22 to 25. I am certain that that figure would be increasingly higher if we collected data citywide, but we just did it for Unity.

I want to give you a walk through of an attitude of the client population that we serve, coupled with all the other things that I have heard so far. Some of our clients come in with an attitude of distrust, shame, anger, low self-esteem, frustration, quick temper, ill mannered, selfishness, thievery, and deception, denial of homeless state, failure to accept help when offered, and failure to put forth an effort to change are just a few attitudes of the homeless.

The list is endless. But the one attitude that is found in the majority of the homeless is "nobody cares about me, so I cares about nobody."

Why? Why do you say should they feel this way. We give them food, clothing, we put them up in shelters, churches or anyplace there are rooms or beds or cots. They do not have to pay rent, utilities and nothing is expected of them. So why are these attitudes?

Let's follow the homeless through his day. They need to get all of their paperwork done. So now we get into the redtape. They go to apply for a Social Security card, or for some other services. There aren't any. They find they need identification and this is where disappointments set in. Now, we have to get identification in order to get identification.

We go to get a birth certificate, but that costs. So what now? Distrust. They stood in line most of the day and are now very hungry, but wait. We have no money for that, and it is not time to go back to the shelter yet. So we stroll into a store, and well, you guessed it. We steal some food. Well, we have eaten now and go for a walk to think. We sit down on a bench, and then it hits us. Anger. But at who and for what?

Now, it is time to go back to the shelter and when we return and face our peers and the staff, that we have tried to deceive by pretending we don't care, we feel shame and low self-esteem. Everywhere they look there is a wall or barrier to climb that even we, as productive ones, find hard to handle. So how frightening this all

must seem to the homeless, to be thought of as nonexistent. So we are homeless. So who are the homeless? Storeowners, the businessmen, the housewives, children, and frankly speaking, any of us could be faced with homelessness at some point in our life, circumstances vary.

But now we can see some of the reasons they have these attitudes, but then, don't we all? There are no shelters on the South Side of Chicago for the homeless and runaway youth, male or female. Few or no shelters for women and children on the South Side, and/or in the black community.

There is a need for increased funding for shelters and services for the homeless youth, especially in the black communities. The shelters and staff for youth services are inadequate due to a lack and cuts of funds. There are no resources of services on the south side of the city.

What is the solution to the homeless problems? Is it low income, employment, education, money, et cetera.

In man's quest to help self and other men, but seeking solutions outside of himself he has failed.

I will conclude by saying, as you purge yourself of your inner conflicts, you will be helping humanity take a giant step forward in the pursuit of peace and the elimination of homelessness; for homelessness is one individual's inner conflicts magnified a million times.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Ms. Milton.

Let me ask each of you if you can just in capsule form tell me how your program is financed. Dr. Mohn, I will start with you.

Dr. MOHN. Our program is financed through a combination of private foundation dollars, and demonstration grants from the State government.

Mr. SIMON. Mr. Behrens.

Reverend BEHRENS. The Night Ministry has two programs dealing with homeless youth. One is Outreach, and the other is a demonstration project developing a new model of foster care using local community groups, such as churches. We receive primarily private donations, some foundation grants, United Way, and we also participate in a joint project funded by the office of Substance Abuse Prevention, a new project.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Berg.

Ms. BERG. City, State, county, private foundations, individuals, the United Way. We also get money from the State of Illinois for demonstration projects, Federal Government gives us a little bit.

Mr. SIMON. And how much of your total budget would come from state and Federal Government?

Ms. BERG. The Federal Government probably for our total budget is less than 10, far less than 10 percent. State is probably closer to about 75 percent, and then all other sources with United Way and foundations and corporations make up the bulk.

Mr. SIMON. OK. Ms. Albright.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Our agency is funded similar to Pat's agency. State and Federal contracts and grants, United Way, foundations, charitable trusts, donations from church and community organizations. Our homeless program specifically is funded by the Department of Children and Family Services and the Juvenile Justice

Commission, and last year we were successful in receiving some Stewart B. McKinney money through the Emergency Food and Shelter Grant, and Emergency Shelter Grant Programs.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Milton.

Ms. MILTON. Our program is funded in part by the city, foundations, corporations, individuals, and churches.

Mr. SIMON. And if I may just address some individual questions to you. Ms. Milton, you say Unity, which is your group, turned away 274 clients. What happened to the 274 you turned away? You turned them away, you just didn't have room?

Ms. MILTON. In some instances part of that figure was inappropriate. But a part of that figure was that we did not have space to accommodate them.

Mr. SIMON. And what happened to those, do you have any idea?

Ms. MILTON. Well, normally when we turn a client away we contact Department of Human Services. Some instances, we are able to find services to accommodate that person, in most instances we are not. So we don't know what happens. They either stay in the same situation or be on the streets, go to jail. We don't know what really happens to them because we don't have that kind of networking system set up to determine what happens to a client. The other part of that, if we don't have the space to accommodate that client and if we call another shelter and they can't help them, we can't do anything about it.

Mr. SIMON. Now, you serve young males only.

Ms. MILTON. Right. We have a bed capacity of 16.

Mr. SIMON. And is there a counterpart to what you do to serve young females in the South Side?

Ms. MILTON. No. There is not. There is a women and children, but not for young females, especially. It is for adult women and children. We are the only shelter on the south side of Chicago serving the 18- to 25-year-old male. We are the only transitional shelter on the South Side of Chicago.

Mr. SIMON. And if an 18-year-old female is in the same situation and you hear about it what do you do to help her?

Ms. MILTON. We can't really do anything, other than attempt to find a resource for her. Sometimes we do; sometimes we don't. It just depends. The women and children shelter may accept her sometime, in most cases they will not. And it is just that she is left out there.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Milton, and this clearly is a need in the south side. I assume when you talk about the needs in the south side, the needs in the west side would be even greater?

Ms. MILTON. Probably so. It is just that I live there and I am really concerned about that area, and you know, it doesn't make any—the need is great all over. It is just that I realize and recognize it is also great on the South Side of Chicago.

Mr. SIMON. But where you have a greater intensity of poverty, inevitably you probably have a greater problem.

Ms. MILTON. Right. I agree.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Albright, one of the things you mentioned is the lack of employment for people. One of the programs that I have sponsored in the Senate, Congressman Gus Hawkins has sponsored in the House, would guarantee a job opportunity to anyone who is

out of work for 5 weeks. It would be 4 days a week, at the minimum wage, not a lot of money, \$464 a month. Would that kind of a program be of help to you as you see this?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Oh, yes, in a couple of ways it would be a help. If it is for a limited period of time it would at least get young people started in terms of building a résumé or acquiring work experience so that they have something to offer when they go out and look for a job. It would help in terms of, financially it would help obviously. But if the employers at the same time are not receptive to that type of program, are not receptive to the type of young people that are coming to them, that may be just beginning in the work force and their expectations of those young people, and if they are receptive to work with programs that are training those young people and teaching them good work habits, and job retention skills, et cetera, then it could be a successful working relationship between the private and public sector.

Mr. SIMON. Do you have anyone in the business community helping you?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Yes. We are lucky in that our agency, being a comprehensive agency, provides two JTPA Employment Training Programs in Cook County, as well as Will County. The obstacles that we faced the first year was that they required so much, as she mentioned, identification and documentation so that they could get enrolled in those programs. We work awfully hard with both the private industry councils in Will and Cook County, and they have set up a system whereby we can sign an affidavit stating that these young people are in our program and we are able to bypass all of the requirements in terms of back-up documentation and birth certificates, and employment, financial proof of employment for the past 6 months, et cetera. So we have been lucky and we have got employers that we formed developed an employers advisory board, and they work with us around these issues, and they place our young people in a try out employment program.

Mr. SIMON. Good. You mentioned you serve 100. Are you serving everyone that comes to you or are you turning people away?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, in some form or fashion we serve everyone that comes to us. We were able to build a network so if we don't serve them directly we are able to refer them someplace else. We have to provide bus money to get them there or get in the car and take them someplace else. We try and do that. Our shelter facility in Harvey has a capacity for six young people at any one given time. It is co-ed.

We have subcontracts for some of the local motels in Joliet and in the south suburban area. When our shelter is filled we can contract with them and they have little kitchenettes and we buy groceries; we make arrangements with families that are willing to be host homes that are similar to a foster home, but we don't have to go through the licensing for those that are over 18 years old. In some of those situations, they simply ask us to help with the groceries. So we may buy food for that family and they will house a young person until we can make some other sort of arrangements.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Berg, you talked about Karen, Tim, and Faye. What kind of follow up do you have for Karen, Tim, and Faye?

Ms. BERG. I was hoping you would ask me. I actually know what happened to all those kids.

Karen is in a residential treatment program in Bloomington. We worked, it took us, my worker about 8 weeks literally to get to the girl, to get in back of the dogs because the dogs were her way of protecting herself. And another organization in town called Kaleidoscope which does not necessarily focus its energies on homeless kids, but has a family intervention program worked with us for months building a plan with she and her mother, and she is really fine. And she stills sees her mother and we hope that she doesn't have to go back out in the streets again to think that that is the only way she can make contact.

The other, Tim also went into a longer term program. One of the biggest difficulties I think with this particular population is how long does it take to grow up. It is a question many of us have been asking ourselves personally for years, and I think that it is a little unrealistic to expect a 16-year-old to be able to become independent in three months, especially since those of us with privilege often times have taken years through college and graduate school. And so we placed him in a longer term program, and he is still there.

The other young lady is currently sort of with us and not with us. She has actually done very well in many aspects of her life, and she is staying in a religious community, and has not been hospitalized and is doing fine.

We see a lot of kids, but we are still sort of small. And the two workers that I have currently here in the room with me, over the course of the last year would be able to tell you probably, with the exception of one person, where every single one of these kids is because we still have contact with them.

Mr. SIMON. OK. You mentioned two things that the others may have indirectly referred to, but did not specifically refer to. You mentioned poverty as a cause for the homelessness. Do you want to expand on that? My concern is this: poverty is just not discussed as much as it once was.

Ms. BERG. It is not in anymore.

Mr. SIMON. But it is, the poor are no longer on our doorsteps. It is true, William Wilson's book the "Truly Disadvantaged" even in the black ghetto, the middle income and upper income blacks no longer live in the ghetto, so the poor are no longer right in front of us. It is one of the tragedies of our society today that we are increasingly neglecting the poor. But how does poverty end up causing homelessness?

Ms. BERG. I think that people can't live. I mean it really just gets to be sort of very, very simple. You have "X" amount of dollars to buy clothes, and food, and to pay your rent. And most of the people that we come into contact with, and many of the young people have come from families where their existence is so marginal, even if it is with public aid or all kinds of programs that, you know, those of us who have think the have not's should have, and that if a crisis occurs or if a problem, God forbid, the faucet should leak, or the refrigerator should go out, or somebody that is ill and people are too marginal.

And so, for young people what begins to happen is they are extruded from their families or the people get so frustrated that they

take out their anger on their children, and the kids run. It is just so simple to me. I don't know. I am not an economist, but I was interested in reading an article in the Tribune about that we are almost at full employment and I have to laugh because we are only at full employment for about two-thirds of our economy it seems to me. There is a whole other third that we have just decided doesn't exist.

I don't know how we can continue to do that much longer, because how much more money then will we have to make to support the other third, and if it is one-third this decade will it be half in the year 2000? I think it is a silly long term strategy.

Mr. SIMON. I thank you. If I may go back to you, Ms. Albright. In your testimony you say, public assistance is virtually unavailable to single non-parenting young adults. Why is it almost nonavailable?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, the system is different across the state. I think in Chicago they have general assistance and the suburbs we don't have general assistance or what they call general assistance. Young people are required, or anyone, that needs assistance is required to go to their townships and their local municipalities. And the requirements to receive those funds and to receive a green card, for example, the requirements to receive a medical card through department of public aid, is that you have to have a dependent child.

If our young people are, those of our young people who are not parents, we are unable to get medical cards for them. And this has been an issue with the four agencies that have been working with DCFS through these homeless demonstration programs and trying to coordinate some sort of services with the department of public aid. We have 18 year olds that if they need medical assistance and there is no insurance or if their parents are in existence and unwilling to pay, we have to find the money in our budget sometimes to meet those emergency needs or they go without medical needs, or we look for doctors that have been helpful in offering physicals for a minimum amount.

Mr. SIMON. If I may be more specific. Does the Illinois Department of Public Aid say if you are 18, you have no resources, you are just not eligible?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. If you don't have a child. We have found that in Will County and in the south suburbs. We are not able to get medical cards for those young people.

Ms. BERG. But if you are 18, even in Chicago, you get \$150 a month.

Mr. SIMON. I am sorry. What?

Ms. BERG. If you are 18 and you are in Chicago and you are a single person, you get \$150 a month to live on.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Now, the young people in the south suburbs could get that money if they weren't connected with a program. So they maybe could get \$100 to \$150, but as long as they are in our program and if they are living in our independent living home, our shelter facility, that knocks them out of the ball park. They can't get the money.

Mr. SIMON. They can't get any assistance.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Because they don't need it; because supposedly they already have these resources.

Mr. SIMON. Pastor Behrens, you say here, and this ties in with Dr. Mohn's testimony, that we are only reaching about 20 percent of those who need to be helped. You say we must go out and find them for they have been given up on, we must go out in the streets along their pathways, into the voids where they exist and so forth. To be a little more specific, how do we reach these people, whether it is 80 or 70 percent, whoever we are not reaching, how do we communicate that help is available?

Reverend BEHRENS. I think there are a number of ways that we do that. We have been involved in Outreach for over 12 years, in terms of having staff on the street and in the community, hanging out in places in the case of youth where homeless youth would hang out. I think there is a large percent of kids on the street that we meet who aren't reached because they have been through services and through State systems, and the system and the kid have not worked together, and the result is that it has failed, and they are burned out on systems that are set up to establish systems that are there to help them. And so they are distrusting. Whether it is the schools, or agencies, or the State, and they are unwilling to go forward and try and give them another chance.

In order to reach them I think we have to go out, perhaps hang out on the corners, the pinball parlors, hang out where the kids are at, develop a relationship where they know there are people who are not there just to abuse them, but are there to help them. That is one for Outreach.

Other forms of Outreach are providing some kinds of basic services. I just recently visited some programs in Los Angeles where a major source of Outreach was a free medical clinic that provided some basic medical services to kids. So if we can provide basic services that they need, it might be emergency overnight shelter, food, medical attention, an opportunity to get a shower, wash clothes, any kinds of just basic human dignity kinds of things, we can reach them.

Now, it is not enough just to do those things, to find out who they are and hook them, we must then also be developing a relationship that says here is a place that you can come to and get some kind of help. We are not going to force you into the pigeon-hole of our program. People have tried that with many of these kids and that has not worked. We are going to allow you to make decisions, but we are going to offer you opportunities.

So I think that we have to go out, let them know that there are things, there are places, there are people that will help them. We need to provide for some of their basic human needs that will help them transcend this period of time, and we need to regain their trust. We have lost it.

Mr. SIMON. Dr. Mohn, if I may direct the same question to you. How would you respond?

Dr. MOHN. I think Tom is absolutely correct that to reach those kids which currently aren't being reached requires assertive street Outreach. Going to where the kids are. Our experiences with homeless kids, as well as with many homeless adults is there is a mistrust of the institutionalized providers, there have been bad experi-

ences in accessing those services in the past, and those barriers must be overcome. And I think all of the providers at this table would agree that it is the responsibility of service agencies to go out and meet the kids on the street, in the pinball parlors.

Mr. SIMON. But suddenly, if instead of reaching 20 percent we were reaching 40 percent, we wouldn't have the facilities, would we?

Dr. MOHN. Clearly.

Ms. BERG. Take them home.

Reverend BEHRENS. I would like to comment on that if I could. I think one of the things that is often overlooked is trying to encourage and enable local community groups, that aren't even necessarily organized as non-profits yet, but to encourage and help local groups to provide services in their communities. There are efforts around the country, by groups, to do this, to develop models, to develop programs. Katie Milton, if I understand correctly, for her program opened up her own home because she saw a need in the community. She does not come out of the same traditional social service background to serve these kids that many of us do. I think that needs to be encouraged, promoted and supported.

Dr. MOHN. I think clearly a recognition of homeless youth as a distinct population group in need of services is an essential first step. There was some recognition of that in the McKinney act, especially in affordable housing provisions. The amendment that you mentioned earlier are beginning to make that definition, and therefore, provide for some coordinated planning by local community groups, by public and private sector. But that definition of this population as a unique group with unique needs has to be the foundation. And any efforts that can be realized by yourself and other federal leadership will be much appreciated on a local level.

Mr. SIMON. Let me just underscore one other point that Dr. Mohn made. You say a Los Angeles County study states that if a youth has not resolved his or her homeless situation within one year their life expectancy is no more than 5 to 7 years beyond that point. There is just no question that there is a real life hazard for young people who are not helped. And since you were mentioned here, Ms. Milton, if I may ask this question of you. How did you get interested in this whole problem?

Ms. MILTON. Well, past experience. I was homeless at one time and as a child, 14, I used to wonder where kids go when they got kicked out of the home because they were getting kicked out then. It was in the fifties and sixties, kids were getting put out of their homes then. No one was as concerned then as they are now. And I always had someplace to go, but I wondered where those kids went, and later on in life, out of past experience, I started a shelter in a three flat building, that is now called Unity.

Mr. SIMON. Good for you.

Ms. MILTON. Thank you.

Mr. SIMON. Let me ask one final question of each of you. Just give me a short answer. How can the Federal Government most effectively be of help, and I know there is a one word answer, money, but the question is how do we target that money assuming that some resources are available? What do we do? How do we most effectively provide the assistance that is needed? Since we started off

with you, Dr. Mohn, we will just go right down here, ask each of you.

Dr. MOHN. Clearly to underscore what you said, the provision of resources, targeting those resources to state governments, community based organizations that are providing services that are street based, that provide drop in center services ranging from emergency needs to an independent living skill training, to educational services, to employment services. Looking at the range of shelter and housing opportunities from emergency overnight shelter to transitional housing, to permanent affordable housing. All must be targeted efforts, and must be planned for in local, state and federal collaborations so that some of the existing child welfare barriers which prevent the kind of new responses to this population group can in fact be realized with those new resources.

Mr. SIMON. Pastor Behrens.

Reverend BEHRENS. I think there are two things I would initially suggest. One, that you sponsor some kind of national symposium, workshop, or whatever you might call it, for both legislators and service providers to begin to understand this is a unique population, to discover what creative things are going on, and begin to develop some kind of compassionate policy. We need to have a politics of compassion. I think secondly, we need to provide for continuum of services and we need most importantly, because there are a lot of these services already out here, but they are not networking. We need to encourage the networking between public, private, nonprofit and community groups working together to provide this continuum of services.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Berg.

Ms. BERG. This is a hard question to answer because what concerns me more than people not having homes is that they can't read. Because it is difficult then to be able to join the mainstream if you have no skills with which to do that. And so while I believe it is important for us to provide the base of physical support, we have to get back to basics, and I would say literacy and basic skills training. If you only had \$2.50 that is where I would put my money.

Mr. SIMON. If I might add, there is kind of an assumption in much of this that school counseling is often broken down in terms of helping young people and really finding out what the problems are, and reaching them before they reach the point of homelessness. Ms. Albright.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. I would have to agree with Pat that the educational and independent living skill type programs are important, in addition of course, to providing shelter for young people. Additionally, what I think that the Federal Government could do in terms of facing this problem or dealing with this problem would be to not make the requirements so stringent in terms of how we access those funds. Requirements such as we have to provide a 50 percent match in dollars to receive certain funds to deal with homeless young people. So those sort of things can help in encouraging the private sector and the public aid system, I hate to keep on that, but the medical field has just been very difficult for us. So encouraging those two type of governmental bodies would be helpful.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Milton.

Ms. MILTON. Well, I agree with everything that I have heard, in addition to, I feel that there is a need for more supportive services, more shelters. But I think the one thing that is extremely important is that some low-income housing be developed, especially for these young people, to have a place to stay and to realize that it is going to be important to get back into the mainstream. Shelters are important. They are great. Again, we are talking about limited time. We are talking about many things, and the question comes, are shelters the answer. However, we do need more. My main concern in addition to all the other things is the political structure on the community level, and that has been my greatest fight. And it is very personal, you know. I am sure other shelters have had some problems with that, but mine is with community politics that has prevented me from even starting another shelter or even in an effort to sometimes maybe this one closed down. I don't know.

Mr. SIMON. So that I follow you. Is it a problem that frankly the neighbors don't want to have a shelter in their neighborhood and so they have reached the political leaders?

Ms. MILTON. No. The political leaders didn't want me there from the beginning. The community has been very receptive. We are 5 years old now. We have not had a problem with the community. It has been a problem with the political figures not wanting me there, and as a result they have stopped some of the funding that we should have got, or we would have got had it not been the feelings of the——

Mr. SIMON. Well, if you run into that problem maybe I can be of help. So don't hesitate to——

Ms. MILTON. Well, it was a fight with an Alderman. He does not want me there.

Mr. SIMON. All right.

Ms. MILTON. And if you could straighten that out. [Laughter.]

Really I am concerned about the population. I am concerned about helping people and to see the young people out, and believe me, it is plenty. We are turning away youngsters now that are out on the street that we can't serve.

Mr. SIMON. All right. When this is all over you talk to somebody on my staff or get a hold of me and let's see if we can't maybe be of some assistance.

Ms. MILTON. I appreciate that.

Mr. SIMON. Let me thank all of you, not only for your testimony, but much more, for your leadership. I really appreciate what you are doing. Thank you very, very much.

[The prepared statement of Katie Milton follows:]



7953 SOUTH ESCANABA - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60617 (312) 378 5401

Good Morning! I am Katie Milton, Executive Director for Unity Shelter. Unity Shelter is a 5 yr. old organization, which serves homeless males 18-25. We have a bed capacity of 16.

The reason I am here this morning is that I excepted the request of the Senator to participate and to share with you the problems and concerns and my experience with the homeless youth population from my prospected.

For fiscal year 87-88 during an eleven month period, Unity turned away two hundred and seventy-four clients, also for the same period we served one-hundred and four clients, with 6% being age 17, 51% age 18-21 and 43% between the age 18-21 and 43% between the age of 22-25. I am sure that if we collected data city wide, those figures would be increasing high, along with the need for additional shelter and service for the homeless youth population. There is also a need for more persons who are willing to take the responsibility of serving that population.

There are no shelters on the South Side of Chicago, for homeless and run away youth male or female. Few or no shelters for women and children on the South Side and or the black community.

There is a need for increase funding for shelter and services for homeless youth, especially in the black communities. The shelters and staff for youth service are inadequate due to a lack and cut of funds. There are no shelter for homeless youth on the South Side. There are no resources or services on the south side of the city.

What is the solution to the homeless problem? Is it low income housing, employment, education, money, etc..

In man quest to help self and other men, but seeking solutions outside of himself he has failed.

Is the homeless problem another ill that man has created in his quest to solve problems, to increase taxes, or to support the status quo (poverty).

As you purge yourself of your inner conflicts, you will be helping humanity take a giant step forward in the pursuit of peace and the elimination of homelessness; for homelessness is one individual's inner conflicts magnified a million times.

A SHELTER INC.
(NON-PROFIT)

Mr. SIMON. Then our next panel, I mean no disrespect to the other witnesses, maybe our most important panel. We have some young people here to testify. We want to hear from Shirley, Frank, and Lynda. If Shirley, Frank, and Lynda will come up.

And, Shirley, we will hear from you first.

STATEMENT OF A PANEL CONSISTING OF SHIRLEY, TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAMS; FRANK, TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAMS; AND LYNDIA, AUNT MARTHA'S

STATEMENT OF SHIRLEY

SHIRLEY. Hi; I am Shirley. I have been homeless for 4 years. Both of my sisters left at the age of 16 because of my family problems with my stepfather. When I was first homeless I moved around from friend to friend. At some places there were a lot more drugs being used, and often people selling them. There were a lot of drug-pushers out on the street. It is not good to buy drugs from pushers. There are a lot of drugs that can do a lot of harm. Some can kill you. I personally did not do those kinds. The only thing I really ever did was cocaine and pot. When I stayed with people I was often at their mercy and had to do things I really did not like. This caused me to move from place to place.

When I was homeless I used to sleep in cars and basements. I used to borrow money from friends, my friends used to feed me. Friends used to get me high once in a while and I would drink. When I had no money I used to steal food and money. Now be honest, if you were homeless how many of you would steal food and money?

I always wondered where I would take my showers and where my next meal would come from. I always took all my clothes with me. When I was sleeping in basements, I used to wash my clothes in cold water and hand dry them. I did not have a dryer and through the winter months I dressed in cold wet clothes. How do you dry your clothes besides hanging them up? You get used to it real fast. I didn't know where to get help from. I had nobody to turn to. I had a hard time. I didn't have my parents.

My sisters didn't have a hard time because one had moved in with my grandmother and one sister had moved in with her boyfriend. After she moved in, a year later she had a child. I dropped out of school at the age of 16. At the age of 17 I had a child of my own. I had a lot of physical problems and emotional problems resulting from my family life. I got sick a lot. I wound up in the hospital so many times without money, the hospital got me a medical card.

When you are homeless you tend to lose a lot of things like clothes, self-respect, and dignity. The main thing you lose is self-respect. We need more programs to help other homeless youth make it and try to be somebody. It is real tough. Take it from me, I know. I also think there should be ads in the paper and commercials on television about shelters. They should also pass out flyers on the streets. This way they know where they can go. For those with problems counseling should be provided. If you have support guidelines in solving these problems you will do a lot better. I would get clothes donated for the homeless. It would be nice if de-

partment stores would donate clothes that were on the clearance racks too long. I think it should be taken into great consideration. If you need anything all you have to do is ask. I am sure they will do the best they can.

All the CHA buildings should be fixed and made into 24-hour shelters or into cheap housing. The shelters should provide food, clothing, shoes. Some people need glasses and dental. I am 20 years old and I am in a program for the young homeless.

When I was homeless there were no shelters for me, only for the people who were 18 and older. They need a shelter for 18 and younger. If they happen to open another shelter they should provide showers, counseling, food, laundry facilities. If the youth are not in school, the shelter should guide them some place where they can go to get their GED. When I had nowhere to go I called my godmother who found the Transitional Living Program for me. I realize there are things I have to do for myself.

Since I came to the program I am going for my GED; I am saving for an apartment. If anybody wants to get their life together all they have to do is try. I am a lot happier with myself now than when I was 4 years ago. If you figured out what I had to do for myself, and I am doing it. I have a real big part of me that inside that is all full of hope. I hope you can realize what happens to you if you are homeless. Please think twice. You only learn from your mistakes, not anybody else's.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Shirley.

[The prepared statement of Shirley follows:]

Hi I'm _____. I have been homeless for (4) years both of my sisters left at the age of (16) sixteen, because of family problems with my step father when I was first homeless. I moved around from friend to friend. At some places there were a lot of drugs being used and often people selling them. There are a lot of drug pushers out on the street. It's not good to buy drugs from pushers. There are a lot of drugs that can do a lot of harm to you. Some can kill you. I personally did not do those kinds. The only thing I really ever did was cocaine and pot. When I stayed with people I was often at there mercy and had to do things I really didn't like. This caused me to move from place to place. When I was homeless I used to sleep in cars and basements. I used to borrow money from friends. My friends used to feed me. Friends used to get me high and once in a while I would drink. When I had no money I used to steal food and money. Now be honest, if you were homeless how many of you would steal to get food and money.

I always wondered where I would take my showers and where my next meal would come from. I always took all of my clothes with me. When I was sleeping in the basement I used to wash my clothes in cold water and hand dry them. I didn't have a dryer and through the winter months I dressed in cold wet clothes. How do you dry your clothes besides hanging them up. You get used to it real fast. I didn't know where to get help from. I had nobody to turn to. I had a hard time. I didn't have my parents. My sisters didn't have a hard time, because one had moved in with my grandmother and my other sister moved in with her boyfriend. After she moved in a year later she had a child. I dropped out of school at the age of (16) sixteen. At the age of (17) seventeen I had a child of my own. I had a lot of physical problems and emotional problems resulting from family life. I got sick a lot. I wound up in the hospital so many times with out money that the hospital got me a medical card. When you are homeless you tend to lose a lot of things like clothes, self-respect, and dignity. The main thing you lose is self-respect. We need more programs that help other homeless youth to make it and to try and be somebody. It's real tough. Take it from me. I know. I also think there should be ads in the paper and commercials on television about shelters. This way they know where they can go. For those with problems counseling should be provided. If you have support and guide lines in solving these problems you will do a lot better. I would get clothes donated for the homeless. It would be nice if the department stores would donate clothes that were on clearance racks to long. I think it should be taken in to great consideration. If you need any thing all you have to do is ask. I'm sure they will do the best they can.

All the CHA (Chicago Housing Authority) building should be fixed and made into 24 hr shelters, or into cheap housing. The shelter should provide food, clothing, shoes. Some people need glasses and dental. I am 20 yrs old and I'm in a program for young homeless people when I was homeless there were no shelters for me. Only for those people who were 18 & older.

They need a shelter for 18 and younger. If they happen to open another shelter they should provide showers, counseling food and laundry facilities. If the youth are not in school the shelter should guide them to some place where they could get their G.E.D. When I had no where to go I called my god mother who found the Transitional Living Program (TLP) for me. I realize there are things I have to do for myself. Since I came to the program, I'm going for my G.E.D. I have a full time job, and I am saving for my apartment. If anybody wants to get their life together all they have to do is try.

I am a lot happier with my self now than I was 4 years ago. I figured out what I had to do for myself and I'm doing it. I have a real big part of me inside that's all full of hope.

I hope you can realize what can happen to you if you're homeless. Please think twice. You only learn from your mistakes not somebody else.

I hope I have been a great help to you. Thank you so much for listening to me.

STATEMENT OF FRANK

FRANK. Hello. I am here today to tell you a little bit about myself and to make people aware of the issues of homeless among teenagers and young adults. There is a need of programs to benefit and assist us.

I was born in 1970, which makes me 18. I was born with my mother, I never knew my father. At the age of 3, DCFS moved in and removed me for reasons of neglect. From the ages of 3 to 5 I was in 13 temporary foster placements. At the age of 5 I was placed in a long-term adoptive placement. From then until I was 7 I had contact with my original mother. At the age of 7 my mother disappeared from the system. Two years later, my foster mother began physically and mentally abusing me. Since my foster mother worked for DCFS I had a hard time trying to prove my point.

The abuse was coming from my foster mother. The rest of the family just ignored or didn't do anything about what was going on. There was no way possible that they were going to take a young foster kid's word over her's. I was also scared and very young, so I said no more.

When I turned 12 I was up for adoption. Because my mother had not come up with a suitable and safe environment in 7 years there was nothing she could do. She also was not around to disagree. So, this family ended up adopting me.

A few months later I ran away. The police believed me, but when it came down to prove the physical abuse I could not prove it. The caseworker told me I had no bruises or marks to prove it. I ended up back at home. So, I was stuck in a dead-end situation.

At the age of 12 I decided to stop what was going on. This is even when more conflict started. I broke down the door she had me locked up behind. I disobeyed the abusive rules she had. We had major fights between me and her. She hid all the knives because she began to get afraid of me. A month later I was placed in a private psychological hospital. I got there and tried to tell them, but they didn't believe me. They looked more at the after effect than the facts. Of course, I was young and my word didn't mean much. I was there 5 months and I refused to go home, but there was no place where I could go so I ended up back at home. So, a few months later I got back and the abuse started again.

This is when I started running away. So, by running away I did not get in good standing with the police. So, when I complained to them they did not believe. So, I turned to the street. So, at 14 I survived in the street by stealing and borrowing money. I slept in abandoned cars, in back of churches, houses, and parks. There was no where to turn to.

It could have been too embarrassing to tell my teachers. So, I spent all day where it was warm and open. Things worsened and I spent all day hanging out at parks. This did not help my schooling or my lifestyle. All my grades dropped, and my level of respect for myself also dropped.

I had no relatives or anyone of that sort. I got kicked out of school for stealing and was placed in another school. So, at the age of 15½ the fights became so severe I wasn't even allowed in the house except late at night. Most of the time I didn't return home

for days at a time. I had to leave the house at 5 in the morning and be back at 1:30 at night. So, I was now living on the street full time.

So, now I became a nuisance to society. I always tried to find places to sleep, but that was not always possible. There was many nights I woke up barely able to walk because my feet were so cold, but I had no choice. It all caught up with me my junior year. I got kicked out of school and did not reenter. So, during the day I had no one place to go.

One month later, due to all that happened, I was again hospitalized. I knew this was my chance to truly and finally get away. I knew there was no need for hospitalization, but it was my chance. I took a psychiatric test, but even though I passed it there was no place for me to go. For 5 months I found out I was too old, too young, not a ward of the State, and so no programs would accept me. So, again I was stuck with no place to go. For 5 months I waited and waited. Finally I could not wait or stand it any longer.

The doctor drove me to the police and left me in their custody. The police called Lutheran Services. They spoke to me once again. Last time they had spoke to me because of the abuse calls, it came up unfounded. But this time they told me they were sorry, but it is too late, now you are too old for foster care and too young for half-way houses.

So, I found a brochure and they called TLP. I was taken to an emergency TLP shelter. I also found out that my half-sister had been admitted to a hospital for at least 5 years. So, at the age of 17, because there was no place to go, I was in TLP. I will never guess how I did it, but I finally found a job and saved a bit of money. Since it took so long to find a job I had to move out within 90 days. I barely made it, but I held the apartment for 9 months.

I needed to know more about independent living, budgeting and I needed more time. I went back to TLP after the 9 months. I entered Project Opportunity and Independent Living Program. I am now back in school. I already had a job when I got there, but I am still looking for a new job. I haven't found one yet, but I still am looking.

I now am able to do much more than I was able to do on the streets. I hope that whatever happens today, I hope that this will help other youths and get programs that they really need.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you very, very much, Frank.

[The prepared statement of Frank follows:]

Hello I am here today to tell you a little about myself and to make people aware of the issues of homelessness among teenagers and young adults. There is a need for programs to benefit and assist us.

I was born in 1970, which makes me 18. I was born with my mother, I never knew my father. At the age 3, DCFS moved in and removed me for reasons of neglect. From the ages of 3 to 5 I was in 13 temporary foster placements. At the age of 5, I was placed in a long term adoptive placement. From then until I was 7 I had contact with my mother. At the age of 7 my mother disappeared from the system. Two years latter my foster mother began physically and mentally abusing me. Since my foster mother worked for DCFS I had a hard time trying to prove my point. The abuse was coming from my foster mother. The rest of the family just ignored or didn't do any thing about what was going on. There was no way possible they were going to take a young foster kids word over her's. I was also scared and very young, so I said no more. When I turned (12) twelve I was up for adoption, because my mother had not come up with a suitable and safe environment in 7 years. There was nothing she could do. She was also not around to disagree. So this family ended up adopting me. A few months latter I had ran away. The police believed me, but when it came time to prove the very physical abuse I could not prove it. The caseworker told me that I had no bruises or physical marks. I ended up back at home. So I was stuck in a dead end situation. At the age of (12) twelve I decide to stop what was going on. That is when even more conflicts started. I broke down the door she had me locked up behind, I disobeyed the abusive roles she had. We had major fights between me and her. She hid all the knives, because she had begun to get afraid of me. A month later I was placed in a private psychological hospital. I got their and tried to tell them, but they didn't believe me. They looked more at the after affect then the fact's of courses was young and my word didn't mean much. I was their (5) months and I refused to go home, but their was no place where I could go I ended back at home. so few month's after I got back the abuse started again. That is when I started running away. So by running away I did not get in good standing with the police. so when I complained to them they did not believe me. So I turned to the street. So at (14) fourteen I survived on the street by stealing and borrowing money. I slept in abandon cars, in back of churches, houses and parks. There was no one to turn too. It would have been too embarrassing to tell my teachers so I spent my days where it was warm an open. Things worsened and I spent all day hanging out at park's. This did not help my schooling or my lifestyle. All my grades dropped and my level of respect for myself also dropped. I had no relatives or anyone of the sort. I got kicked out of school for stealing and was placed in another school. So at the age of (15) fifteen and half the fights became so severe I wasn't even allowed in the house except late at night. Most of the time I didn't return home for day's a a time. I had to leave the house at 5 in the morning and be back at 1:30 at night. So I was now living on the street full time. So I now became a nuisance to society. I always tried to

find warm society. I always tried to find places to sleep but that was not always possible. There were many nights were I woke up barely able to walk, because my feet were so cold but I had no choice. It all caught up with me in my junior year, I got kicked out of school and did not re-enter, so during the day I had no warm place to go. One month later due to all that had happened I was again hospitalized. I knew this was my chance to truly and finally get away. I knew there was no need for hospitalization, but it was my chance. I took a psychiatric test, but even though I passed it there was no place for me to go. For 5 months I found out I was too old, too young, not a ward-of-the-state, and so no programs would accept me. So again I was stuck with no place to go. So for 5 months I waited and waited. Finally I could not wait or stand sit there any longer. The doctor drove me too the police and left me in their custody. The police called Lutheran services. They spoke to me once again. Last time they had spoken to me because of abuse call's it came up unfounded, but this time they told me they were sorry but it is too late now you are too old for foster care and too young for half way houses. So I found a brochure and they called TLP. I was then taken to emergency TLP shelter. I also found out that my half-sister had been omitted to a hospital for at least 5 years. So at the age of 17, because there was no other place to go I was in TLP. I will never guess how I did it, but I finally found a job and saved a bit of money. Since it took so long to find a job I had to move out within the 90 days. I barely mad it, but I did hold the apartment for 9 months.

I needed to know more about Independent Living, budgeting and I needed more time. I went back to TLP in 9 months. I entered Project opportunity and Independent Living Program. I am now back in school. I already had a job when I got there, but I now am able to look for a new job. I haven't found one yet but I still am looking. I now am able to do much more then I was able to do on the streets. I hope that what ever happens today, I hope that this will help other youth's and programs get what they really need.

STATEMENT OF LYNDA

LYNDA. My name is Lynda Buckner. I am 18 years old, and I am representing the Aunt Martha's Youth Program in Harvey, IL.

During the whole time I was growing up I had to deal with many emotional problems, like being molested and suffering the loss of my grandmother to alcoholism. A lot of the experiences I had were very traumatic and I had to deal with them on my own. This was because my parents had so many problems themselves that they didn't have time to help me with mine.

The only way I found I can cope with everything was to forget about all the problems. I just buried them deep inside and never thought about them. This worked for a while, but the longer I did this the more severe a new problem became. This problem was called depression. My depression got more and more severe as I went into adolescence. It effected my education, my home life, and my self-image. My grades went from a "B" average to a "D" and "F" average. I couldn't get along with my family members and I hated myself.

It was like a chore for me even to get up in the morning. I was so unmotivated that I couldn't psych myself up to do a simple chore, like washing the dishes.

This was only the beginning though. When I was a sophomore in high school, my parents got separated for a reason I wish not to go into right now. So this, plus my depression, I no longer had a desire to live. I would try to think of a way to end my life that wouldn't be painful but I never went through with it. Deep down inside I still wanted to live, and I knew I had to find a way of recapturing my desire to keep going.

I couldn't get along with my parents because I had so much anger and resentment toward them that I kept inside because of their alcoholism. I would get kicked out of one parent's house into the other so many times that I felt like a tennis ball. Finally, I got kicked out of my mother's house for the last time. My dad wasn't going to take me back anymore, and I had nowhere to sleep except the basement of my mother's apartment.

That was when I knew that I really needed to get help. My parents convinced me that I should go into the hospital, so I admitted myself into Ingall's Open Psychiatric Ward. They accepted me in the adolescent program and I went through intense therapy for 3 months. Ingall's referred me to the Aunt Martha's Program as an alternative living arrangement for me when I was to be discharged.

I found out that through the Aunt Martha's Program I would have a chance to finish my education, to get a good job and eventually have enough knowledge to be on my own. I accepted this offer and I am now staying at the Aunt Martha's facility in Harvey. Thanks to Ingall's and Aunt Martha's I am now over my depression and able to cope with just about any problem that comes up. I feel much better about myself, and I am more confident that I really can make it in the real world. Being at Aunt Martha's I can now learn how to be on my own and have the security of knowing that if something happens, and I don't succeed right away, I won't end up on the streets.

I am not saying that life has been easy for me since I have been out of the hospital. Every day I have to put forth a lot of effort to not become depressed again. But I know that I have the support of the staff at Aunt Martha's to help me through hard times.

I was recently laid off from the full-time job I started when I was released from Ingall's. By the time I appear before you, I will be in the process of getting my high school diploma and starting a new job as a waitress.

My goal is to have a place of my own, to be taking care of myself within the next few months. Thank you.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you. Let me just thank each of you very, very much for coming and telling your story. It is not easy, I know. But by coming and telling your story you are helping other young people who have needs.

Let me ask this of all three of you. Did your school counselor help at all, as you faced the difficulties at first. Shirley, you were 16 when you ran away.

SHIRLEY. I felt as though I couldn't talk to my mother. I couldn't talk to anybody, except for my godmother. She was always there. She was on my side.

Mr. SIMON. Shirley, thank you.

FRANK. I had said before that it is pretty embarrassing at 12 years old to go up to some school counselor who you see maybe once a year, and tell them that you are getting abused. It is not the person you usually talk to.

Mr. SIMON. And so your school counselor isn't really a person that you, in your situation, could go to to get help?

FRANK. I didn't think so, no.

Mr. SIMON. Lynda.

LYNDA. I really didn't think I had anybody because while I was in school I had something that happened to me, at school, and I went to my counselor and he shunned me away from that. So I definitely didn't think I could go to him with personal problems.

Mr. SIMON. Let me ask this question of each of you. Ten years from now, what would you like to be doing? Lynda.

LYNDA. In 10 years I would like to become a musical therapist. I would like to have a degree in music and psychology.

Mr. SIMON. Good for you.

LYNDA. That might take longer than 10 years though.

Mr. SIMON. Good for you. And if we can help you achieve that goal you keep in touch with my office. Will you?

LYNDA. Yes. Sure.

Mr. SIMON. All right. Frank.

FRANK. I am in high school now, but I would like to finish high school, finish college and become a doctor.

Mr. SIMON. Good for you. Shirley.

SHIRLEY. I would like to get my GED, go to Bryman College and get my medical assistant degree.

Mr. SIMON. OK. What can we do for others who face similar problems. What can we do to help other young people who face very, very tough times? Shirley, when you mentioned your grandmother I noticed that you broke down. She was about the only person you could go to for help, is that right?

SHIRLEY. Well, I was able to talk to my grandfather all the time until he passed away. And then it was like my grandmother favored my sister, my mother favored my other sister. I had nobody to turn to. I haven't seen my father in 16 years, so it was hard.

Mr. SIMON. Among other things, we have to have somebody that young people can go to, to talk to to get help, is that right?

SHIRLEY. I had nobody to turn to. The only one I had to turn to was my godmother.

Mr. SIMON. Frank.

FRANK. I mean I had no one to turn to, but I guess it is like you can put people there, but like I said, a lot of people aren't going to go just to talk to these people. I mean the counselors are there, but people aren't going to talk to him.

I think most of the people on the street have to be totally explained who the person is before you speak to him. Because you have got to remember you are coming from the street and you are going to be depressed before you even go to speak to them, so you are not going to be pretty objective to speaking to this person. I think if the person or whoever was on the street knew exactly the reasons and what would happen after speaking to this person, and all the things about him, then it would be a lot easier. But if you are just left to know, to guess, who this person is and what will happen if you go in there to speak to this guy, if he is going to call the police on you, if he is going to do this, if he is going to do that, then you are not going to go speak to him.

Mr. SIMON. Lynda.

LYNDA. Yes. I agree with what he was saying. You have to—there has to be a way that they can emphasize that the adolescent or whoever can trust the person that is going to be helping them. They have to find a way to establish that trust. That way the person that is getting help won't be so scared of not knowing.

Mr. SIMON. Let me just thank all three of you. Shirley, Frank, and Lynda. It is interesting to me when I ask what you wanted to become, each of you wants to move in an area where you can help others. That tells me something very, very good about each of you. And I want you to know we are very, very proud of you. You have overcome problems much greater than most of us have had to overcome, and that just makes us extra proud of you.

We thank you very, very much for being here.

Let me just add a personal note to all three of you. As you move toward your dreams if I or my office can be of help in any way you be sure and just mention that you were here, and you had the courage to come when it wasn't easy for you to come. And I really appreciate it. Thank you. And you are helping a lot of others by being here.

Thank you very, very much.

[The prepared statement of Lynda follows:]

My name is Lynda Buckner, I am 18 years old, and I am representing the Aunt Martha's youth program in Harvey, Illinois.

My childhood was very troublesome, because I lived in a family where there was very little communication, if any.

During the whole time I was growing up, I had to deal with many emotional problems (like being molested and suffering the loss of my grandmother to alcoholism), some of them traumatic, on my own. This was because my parents had so many problems themselves that they didn't have time to help me with mine. The only way I found I could cope with everything was to forget about all the problems. I just buried them deep inside and never thought about them. This worked for a while, but the longer I did this, the more severe a new problem became. This problem was called depression. My depression got more and more severe as I went into adolescence. It affected my education, my home life, and my self image. My grades went from a "B" average to a "D" and "F" average. I couldn't get along with my family members, and I hated myself. It was like a chore for me to even get up in the morning. I was so unmotivated that I couldn't even psych myself up to do a simple chore like washing the dishes.

This was only the beginning though. When I was a sophomore in high school, my parents got separated for a reason that I wish not to go into right now, but it was related to my X-boyfriend. So, with this plus my depression, I no longer had a desire to live. I would try to think of a way to end my life that wouldn't be painful, but I never went through with it. Deep down inside, I still wanted to live, I knew I had to find a way of recapturing my desire to keep going. I couldn't get along with my parents because I had so much anger and resentment towards them that I kept inside. I would get kicked out of one parent's house and to the other's so many times that I started to feel like a tennis ball. Finally, I got kicked out of my mother's house for the last time. My dad wasn't going to take me back anymore so I had nowhere to sleep except in the basement of my mother's apartment.

That was when I knew that I really needed to get help. My parents convinced me that I should go into the hospital. So, I admitted myself into Ingalls open psychiatric ward. They accepted me in the adolescent program and I went through intense therapy for three months. Ingalls referred me to the Aunt Martha's program as an alternative living arrangement for me when I was to be discharged. I found out that through the Aunt Martha's program, I would have a chance to finish my education, get a good job and eventually have enough knowledge to be on my own.

I accepted this offer and I am now staying at the Aunt Martha's facility in Harvey. Thanks to Ingalls and Aunt Martha's, I am now over my depression and able to cope with just about any problem that comes up. I feel much better about myself now and I am more confident that I can really "make it" in the real world. Being at Aunt Martha's, I can now learn how to be on my own, and I have the security of knowing that if something happens, and I don't succeed right away, I won't end up on the streets.

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Lynda Buckner

I'm not saying that life has been easy for me since I've been out of the hospital. Everyday, I have to put forth a lot of effort not to become depressed again. But I do have the support of the staff at Aunt Martha's to help me through hard times.

I was recently laid off from the full time job I started when I was released from Ingalls. By the time I appear before you, I will have registered to take the GED test and working at Pizza Hut. My goal is to have a place of my own and be taking care of myself within the next few months.

Thank you.

Mr. SIMON. Our final panel, Gordon Johnson, director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, and Commissioner Judith Walker, of the Department of Human Services in the city of Chicago.

Very pleased to have you here and we thank you for being here.

STATEMENT OF A PANEL CONSISTING OF GORDON JOHNSON, DIRECTOR, ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES; AND HON. JUDITH A. WALKER, COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, CITY OF CHICAGO

STATEMENT OF GORDON JOHNSON

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Simon. I want to commend you for offering the successful amendment to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act which created a \$5 million grant for community-based groups to provide services to young people.

While this amount is small, I believe it will provide some help and assistance to homeless young people. I also believe that a coordinated Federal, State, and local county-based agency is imperative to successfully address this increasingly serious problem.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is a free standing agency, reporting directly to the Governor. In 1986, 70,000 children were reported to our child abuse and neglect hotline. Since then, we have seen an increase of more than 30 percent; 94,000 suspected victims last year, and even more this year. However, all of these increases cannot be attributed to improved reporting, national studies complement our findings in Illinois that family risk factors are increasing and that violence against children is increasing.

Between fiscal year 1984 and fiscal year 1988, reports of sexual abuse rose 90 percent compared to a 40-percent increase in all other types of abuse and neglect. In fiscal year 1985, 181 infants were reported to us as "cocaine babies." In fiscal year 1988 that number rose to 1,233 drug-affected infants.

My department contracted with the Illinois State University to study the characteristics of our client families between 1976 and 1986. Their study indicated a 60-percent increase in substance abuse in those families; 40-percent increase in unwed parents; 80-percent increase in spousal abuse; violent behavior by children in those client families doubled; physical neglect doubled; sexual abuse tripled. My intent in presenting these startling facts to you is to keep in perspective some of the reasons why we are confronted by the problem of homeless young people today.

Illinois has in place a unique comprehensive community-based system for youth services. Our department and 68 local youth service boards are providing a wide range of services to more than 30,000 young people each year. With funding from DCFS, these agencies provide services designed to divert young people from the juvenile justice, child welfare, and correction systems. The programs serve mainly with the homeless, runaways, schools, truants, and youngsters beyond the control of their parents.

Estimates place the number of homeless youth in Illinois as high as 21,000. As in other States, these young people are often family "throwaways," some are victims of sexual exploitation, some are

pregnant, and some are runaway wards from my department. These are youngsters with whom we cannot cope; or they cannot cope with us.

When these young people see no services immediately available, or they distrust any services, many of them turn to a life of theft, prostitution, pornography, or drugs to support themselves. In 1984, Governor Thompson appointed a Governor's task force on homeless youth. In response to their recommendations, my department and an Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission chaired by Mr. Dallas Ingmenson, established five demonstration programs in Cook County and Aurora. Four of these programs have residential and support services, and one is a drop-in center. These programs offer medical and legal assistance, training and tutoring, employment assistance, and emergency services.

The young people served by these demonstration programs are truly homeless: those who are living on the streets without supervision of parents, relatives or legal guardians; those who cannot be reunited with their families and who lack the skills to support themselves legitimately.

In fiscal year 1988, these five demonstration programs served 1,065 young people. We also serve a good number of runaways who come in contact with the police. Most of these young people are able to return home and live with their families within 2 weeks because of the dedicated intervention and assistance of our community-based agencies. It is our intent to have the service models created by these demonstration programs play a significant role in transitioning young people like these to independent living and self reliance.

In November 1988 I was fortunate to spend time in Australia, seeing and participating first hand in that country's homeless problem. I was impressed with the informal local interagency relationship on the private agency level, but there was a definite lack of intervention, supervision or monitoring on the state levels. The Federal Government in that country has not made their serious homeless problem a priority; nor do they require the states to provide services to their homeless youth. The makeup of Australia's population of homeless children is no different than our homeless children.

Illinois has been attempting to meet the homeless youth problem through a coordinated cooperative effort with a private sector of child welfare service providers.

A week ago, along with a selected group of individuals from the private sector, legislators, I toured homeless programs for youth in Los Angeles and San Diego, CA. We learned that California does not have a statewide youth services network supported with State funds, as Illinois has. We learned that these two cities do have unique and apparently effective drop-in youth shelters for young people. It is our intent, based on that visit, to create demonstration homeless shelter programs that will meet Illinois licensing standards.

The shelters will have no more than 20 beds, and will provide an array of medical, employment, educational, and outreach services to those young people who want to change their lives. We must realize that this particular group of children need an extreme

amount of patience and adult support in order to change. Illinois is hampered by insufficient funds as other States are. Even though, we hope to increase our budget for this group of young people, we could use additional Federal assistance to expand services in areas of need. We believe that Illinois has the will and is capable of tackling this very serious problem.

If we have an adequate infusion of Federal, State, and private sector dollars we can make it happen; and for many of these young people this will be the last chance to survive, to become productive and happy adults.

We stand ready to assist you in any way we can.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you very much. One of the earlier witnesses said we are reaching about 20 percent of the homeless youth now, these young people were falling through the cracks. If we expand and really reach out to more of those who need help, will you have the resources to deal with that?

Mr. JOHNSON. It will take some time to develop those resources. What I have learned through my tours of Australia, Illinois, California, and other States, is that it takes a very unique kind of resource for these young people. It takes us, as one of the young people said today, it takes a person who is going to be worthy of their trust, to understand what the problems are, and be capable of directing them into a system that is going to help them.

You don't find those people every day. We believe, in Illinois, that we have some of those people willing to do those kind of things. But what I was struck with is that we have to understand we are not going to reach every young person. Some kids are not going to be trusting of state systems or any other kind of system. But there are a number out there who want help. And I think if we have those resources we certainly could have a great impact on those who are willing and who need just a little push to get into a system for some assistance.

Mr. SIMON. Now, you mentioned medical assistance being available. We heard testimony from Ms. Lonnetta Albright of the Aunt Martha's Program that one of the major problems that she faces in her program which serves about 100 young people, is the whole question of medical care for them.

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes. Well, we are talking about the broad base. I was talking specifically about certain programs that offer that. There is certainly not enough medical assistance statewide for these young people. It is difficult many times to get the reimbursement through the redtape and through the processes required to get people qualified, in order to get the medical assistance dollars. We have been fortunate in some respects to tailor our system in some areas that will allow us to use Federal/State dollars to provide medical assistance where necessary.

The program that I hope to have demonstrated in the next few months or so will have a medical component to it that will help to screen and make sure that those young people who come in contact with that program will have medical assistance.

Mr. SIMON. One of the witnesses, Ms. Milton, has a program called Unity. She was homeless herself. I don't know if you were here when she testified.

Mr. JOHNSON. No, I wasn't.

Mr. SIMON. And so, she has developed a program, a home. How does your agency work with someone like Ms. Milton or others who want to reach out and help?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, in the area of homeless, we have, as I mentioned, a coordinated community base agencies that work. We call it under the "1500 System" that was developed in the State where we fund community-based agencies to provide services particularly to those youngsters who are locked out of their home, kicked out of their home, or have come in contact with the police.

Mr. SIMON. When you say community-based agency, are you referring to an agency such as Unity setup by Ms. Milton?

Mr. JOHNSON. Right. Those kind of agencies that are located in communities, usually are staffed with individuals from the community, usually have strong community support, and have developed a network of contacts with the police and other agencies so they are known, and they are established, and have credibility so that people will refer these youngsters to them. Those are the kind of agencies we fund. Of course, we don't have enough dollars to fund everyone.

The one area that we are short of the dollars needed to fund adequately is the homeless. I am particularly concerned about parts of Chicago where they seem to gravitate. Where we need a shelter bed system, basically that will allow any youngster to come in, up to 20 beds, and then you start working with them. In other words, you don't kick them out because they are not State wards; you don't kick them out because they have certain problems, but you understand it is going to take some time to work with them.

Those are the kind of programs I am talking about. Those programs are going to take some time in the community to be accepted and trusted by these youngsters in the street who will feel that they can come in for at least a night; and then hopefully we can attract them and get them involved with people who are going to help them to address their immediate problems, like medical, educational, employment, people who will make the system respond to their needs. That is a little different kind of mix than some of the programs we are funding now. Because the programs we are funding now basically are for youngsters who want and need help immediately and who are able to adjust usually fairly quickly; but the "street youngsters" are different. They need a special kind of attention. They need Outreach people who are going to spend a lot of time finding these youngsters and convincing them to try the system. That is the program I am talking about. There are some programs in Illinois like that, who have been funded through other sources, the private, or other financial means which may not have funds from our department.

Mr. SIMON. But reaching those street young people, in terms of the Federal dollars, you are talking about when I go to my colleagues one of the things they are going to say is how can we be sure this money is really going to focus on that need. How can we structure it in such a way to make sure that really happens?

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, if you want to use Illinois as an example, we have played a very important point in coordinating those functions and funds. And I think they need to be directed to a coordinated effort. One thing that became clear to me when I visited those

other States, was that they were lacking coordination—including California where they had a very unique system. But they did not enjoy some of the things that are happening in Illinois, where we coordinate those other agencies and force the agencies to work together, and then the dollars flow to those agencies that can best provide a certain kind of service. Not every agency can provide every kind of service. Some are good at outreach; some are good at counseling; some are good at residential kind of things; some are good at education; some are good at employment.

When you force them to get together, before they get any funding, then I think you can be assured the Federal dollar will go a long way in addressing some of the homeless needs in communities. Without that, then I think you are going to have turf issues. And I think what will happen then is that it will never get the full benefit of all the agencies that need the help, this particular kind of problem.

Mr. SIMON. So, if I read you correctly, you are saying as we provide funding we should stipulate what it goes for, obviously, and that there should be State coordination for that funding?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes. That is very important. Because what happens in those programs that don't have the coordination is that these youngsters miss out because there is either funding or expertise in each one of these services that are needed for these young people. And the State needs to play a role in that, and the local government needs to play a role in that, and particularly the community-based agencies need to play a very important role in that.

Mr. SIMON. I wonder if I could ask Pastor Behrens. Maybe Ms. Berg is here. You just heard the response here. Is there any problem from either of you with just allocating it so that there is State coordination of this kind?

Ms. BERG. Is that like a States right question? It is always very difficult because you have got local communities, you have got the committees that have to coordinate them. You have different areas that need help, even if there is a coordination. I think, somehow, especially in large metropolitan areas, there needs to be some effort to work with the cities. The South Side, for example, has been a terrible concern for many of us for about 5 years. I do not work on the South Side. The North Side has the reputation of being the magnet area to where a lot of the kids go. There needs to be some room for both.

Mr. JOHNSON. Well, if I can amend that. I didn't mean to leave out the city at all. I think that is very important because we have been trying to do that. But what I am saying is, that it came home to me in California—and Mr. Behrens was with me there—that the third chief complaint was no State intervention or working with the city at all. And they found themselves doing things on their own, their own way. And they felt that the State was not taking initiative and forcing agencies to provide standardized programs, in other words, meet certain standards, so that some agencies that are just fly-by-night agencies are not starting up and attracting these kids for other reasons.

And if you don't have the State coordination, I think you could run a risk of allowing some agencies and some individuals who are

going to exploit these young people. That is where I was really coming from.

Mr. SIMON. OK.

Mr. JOHNSON. Because I really got—I struck home and I would like Mr. Behrens to say a few words from his tours.

Mr. SIMON. Very happy to hear from you, Pastor Behrens, I see that Ms. Albright is here also. But basically you are saying a clearance so that we really make sure that people who are getting the funds really deserve the funds. Pastor Behrens, any problem with that?

Reverend BEHRENS. No. I think—I chaired a Youth Committee in Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and we are an advocacy group and we have challenged the State, we work with the State, and I am very happy that recently the director, Director Johnson, has taken a tremendous leadership in trying to do that coordination through a plan and demonstration project. And I think that most appropriate, and I don't have problems with that. And I encourage—I think it is also important that we small agencies, whatever our funding sources is, somehow keep in front of us the concern of homeless youth and rise above some of the petty things that we sometimes get caught in. And I think the State can help us do that.

Mr. SIMON. Ms. Albright, do you care to respond?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, I have to agree that State coordinating funds would be the most effective, the most beneficial way of making sure that the entire State—to try and do it individually and locally we do get into those type issues, as well as, once again, I will go back to the State's department of public aid, of course, department of children and family services has got much more success in making sure or coordinating or explaining that those services will be provided, as they did with the JTPA Program.

Mr. SIMON. Director Johnson, we thank you. I look forward to working with you as we move ahead. Incidentally, all the written statements will be included in full in the hearing record. Commissioner Walker is not here yet. I think we will take a 5-minute break here. Ms. Milton, do you have any response to the suggestion of State coordination here?

Ms. MILTON. Well, no. I sort of agree with that. However, I would like to see some changes. Currently, the city is administering the program to the department of human services. I would like to see a separate group be responsible for that. And it is based on personal experience that I have had in coordinating my efforts on the south side of Chicago.

Mr. SIMON. Director Johnson, we thank you very, very much. Look forward to working with you. I am told that Commissioner Walker is here now. You are our final witness, Commissioner, and we thank you for being here.

[The prepared statement of Gordon Johnson follows:]

TESTIMONY OF
GORDON JOHNSON
DIRECTOR
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION OF
THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

DECEMBER 1, 1988

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is the lead agency in Illinois for serving troubled adolescents and their families.

Through a comprehensive, community-based system of youth services, the Department and 68 local youth service boards provide a wide range of services to more than 30,000 adolescents each year.

The services are designed to divert youth from the juvenile justice, child welfare, and corrections systems.

These are youth who are runaways, school truants, beyond the control of their parents, and homeless.

Homeless youth in Illinois, like homeless youth in most other states, are youth for whom there is simply not enough.

- Not enough programs that will get them through crisis situations.
- Not enough shelters where they can get lodging and food.
- Not enough programs that will give them the education and the training they need to get jobs and become financially independent.
- Not enough counseling and medical services to overcome emotional and physical problems, or alcohol and substance abuse.
- Not enough money to fund the large number of programs that are needed for them in every area of Illinois.

Estimates place the number of homeless youth statewide in Illinois as high as 27,000.

Like their counterparts in other states, they are throwaways and victims of sexual exploitation. Some are pregnant.

With no services available to them, many turn to a life of theft, prostitution, pornography, and drugs to support themselves.

In response to the 1985 Governor's Task Force on Homeless Youth recommendations, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission established five demonstration programs in the Cook and Aurora service regions.

Four of these programs have residential and support services.

One is a drop-in center.

The programs offer medical and legal assistance, training and tutoring, employment assistance, and emergency services.

These demonstration programs serve youth who are truly homeless. . .those who are living on the streets without the supervision of parents, relatives, or legal guardians; who cannot be reunified with their families, and who lack the skills to support themselves legitimately.

In addition to these programs, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, through its comprehensive community-based youth service system, serves runaway youth who come into contact with the police. Most of these youth are reunified with their families within two weeks of referral.

In Fiscal Year 1988, these five demonstration programs served 1,065 youth.

We are continuing to fund them in Fiscal Year 1989.

The goal of these demonstration programs is to transition homeless youth to independent living and self sufficiency.

These demonstration projects are providing valuable insights into the plight of the homeless for future program development.

These insights should be carefully weighed when developing plans to serve youth on a statewide basis.

These insights tell us that a statewide plan for homeless youth should include the following:

- Youth employment projects with intensive residential support.
- Strong linkage with employment and training programs.
- Additional supports, such as adequate day care and parenting training, for pregnant and parenting youth.
- Allowing for failures and "re-starts" where that's developmentally appropriate.

Most importantly, the demonstration projects have pointed out the need:

- For strong interagency cooperation.
- For coordination and efficient use of resources to avoid duplication.
- For expanding the programs to reach more of our homeless youth population in other sections of the Prairie State.

To date, the Department's efforts to meet the needs of Illinois homeless youth have been hampered by insufficient funds.

This year. . .Fiscal Year 1989. . .we have \$500,000 in our budget for homeless youth.

Next year. . .Fiscal Year 1990. . .we hope to increase our budget for this segment of our state's population.

Members of my staff will be glad to share their experiences in providing services for homeless youth with Senator Simon and his staff as they seek to find new ways to help these youth at the national level.

Since Illinois has an excellent community-based system for serving youth, we believe we are in a position to provide valuable information in planning meaningful federal programs that will reach homeless youth and help them prepare for productive and happy adult lives.

We also believe that our agency's involvement will help ensure the coordination of any new federal programs with existing state services for homeless youth.

STATEMENT OF JUDITH A. WALKER

Ms. WALKER. Thank you for inviting me. I did submit total written testimony. I am not going to go through all of it this morning. I do want to raise a couple of issues that we feel very strongly about relating to homeless youth.

We appreciate the opportunity for testifying before you, and think it is a very important issue. I do want to reiterate the issue that we feel that the Government has walked away from supporting families in many ways—despite what everyone claims to be family policies—between low-income jobs, no housing and walking away from social services. It is very difficult for families to cope, and therefore many children get put on the street, both because of the failure of families to cope, and because of the inadequacy of the system to support them.

I would like to use this time to talk about two things that we think are most important.

I chaired the mayor's task force on the homeless and am responsible for the shelter system as it exists in Chicago for adults. We find that youth fall through the cracks, and we find that we are not in a position to service them well. Both the ones who are under 18, and the ones who are 18 to 21. We think that it is important that we have demonstrated a number of programs that work and work well for families in transition, as the homeless families, and we think it is very important to continue the effort to make sure that those kinds of services exist in the city.

I think the one thought I would like to leave this panel with is that all of the services that we have, for which we are funded by the State and the Federal governments, reach less than 10 percent of the need. So that while we have supported some youth shelters, fewer than 100 beds out of 2,500 beds in the city of Chicago, that is not anywhere near enough to meet the kind of demand that is out there. Also the kind of support services that are available to young people or to families in crisis meet less than 5 percent or 10 percent of the need.

We think that we have a number of programs that work well—and I understand you will be seeing some of them this afternoon—that are funded through private agencies. I think it is very important that we have a continuing partnership between the public and private sector. The city of Chicago has taken the position that we do not run shelters directly, but rather we think it is more important to have them funded through not-for-profit agencies. But we do think it is important to have that coordinated through the administrative office.

Again, I want to reiterate the devastation that poverty has caused. I think that one of the issues that we are going to have to deal with in this country is the vast schism that poverty causes and the havoc it causes in communities, including the inability of most of our communities to deal with the other problems that are out there.

I think that is the one thing we want to stress much more firmly than it has ever been stretched before. That if we could just relieve some of the problems of poverty, we wouldn't have half the other problems that we have today.

I also want to stress that it is not practical to think of a program that tries to reunify kids with families because many of these kids cannot go home. We have got to find ways of making them be able to support themselves, in their communities, with what I hope would be the support of not for profits. I mean if we could have a system of not for profits throughout this community, to which young people or vulnerable people can be linked up with as an ongoing way of providing ongoing assistance, we would be in a much better stead as opposed to trying to just reunite them with their families. Because this doesn't work in many instances, and the families can't cope. The family's not being able to cope is partly why the youth are there in the first place.

I have not heard the testimony earlier this morning. I am sure you have heard about the numbers. I am sure you have heard about the problems. So I will not reiterate them and take your time.

I do hope that we do have the total written testimony in the record, but as well, I just want to say that we think that we need to very, very soon take on these kinds of crisis. Because at bottom drugs, teenage pregnancy, everything is linked to one another within these communities. And I think that is something that we need to deal with.

And I appreciate the fact that you are working on this, and we think we need to see more. And in this spirit of Gramm-Rudman I hope we won't take all of the money away from the social programs. And as we move forward, Stewart McKinney is not the only way to solve the homeless problem because it just isn't enough. And try as we might, we cannot fulfill all of the needs.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you very much. And let me just add, I agree with the basic thing you mentioned about poverty being at the bottom of so many of our problems. I talked a little earlier about our just ignoring the problems of poverty to such a great extent in our society. We simply have to pay more attention there.

In practical terms, the director of the department of children and family services has suggested that money allocated, be coordinated through the State. Is that a problem for the city of Chicago for you?

Ms. WALKER. Clearly, we think cities should have the most direction over the moneys that come to them. That is a clear policy of the mayor of the city of Chicago, and of our agency too. I chair the mayor's task force on the homeless which is a coordinating effort on the local level. I think that if the money does go through the States, they should be forced to work with the existing coordinative structures.

I think that the money has to be at the local level, but I would not like to see us getting into a jurisdictional fight if it means stopping the moneys totally. We do maintain a good working relationship with the department of children and family services. But I do think that the kind of mechanism set up for the mayor's task force for the homeless—which includes the private providers, as well as the shelter providers, as well as other funding sources, United Way, and things of that nature, that come together—is the kind of mechanism that has to work on the local level.

So if it goes to the State there should be some mandated local involvement in it. But the State does have the responsibility for youth, especially those under 18. And we would not want to try to usurp that in any fashion.

Mr. SIMON. And in terms of Federal assistance, primarily you just need the resources.

Ms. WALKER. We need the resources. We need the resources; we need housing; but even if we had all the low income housing that we could use in the city there would still be a case load that would require support, and we just need more resources to supply that support. We meet less than probably 10 percent of the need anywhere. We have a great system where we have toll-free hotlines and shelters, and it doesn't really work for the majority of the people because we just don't have enough, and there are waiting lists all over the place for what we think is the most reasonable solution which is transitional type shelters, where you can work with someone for a period of time. There just isn't enough.

Mr. SIMON. Do you work with a school system at all, as you approach this problem of homelessness, in how you counsel young people and so forth?

Ms. WALKER. No, we don't. We work with the school system as it relates to the drugs, and the gangs and pregnancy, but not specifically as it relates to the homeless.

Mr. SIMON. But as you deal with these other problems, obviously there is an impact here. In New York City, which is the worst statistic here, unfortunately, you have fewer than one counselor for every 1,000 students. We had three marvelous young people testifying here today about the problems that they face. They basically didn't feel there was any place to turn in schools for help, for advice.

Ms. WALKER. They are right. It is not just the school problem, it is the whole community problem. There are not enough youth-serving agencies. I think I testified recently that there is some very small number of youth service agencies, maybe 50 in the whole city of Chicago. I don't have that number, but I could get it to you. For the whole city of Chicago, for all of the issues, not just for drugs. We are battling that right now in terms of drug abuse, and in terms of the gang and anti-social behavior. And there are just not enough. And every single one of them has waiting lists, and the ones who are good have lists twice as long.

So that there is no place really to turn. It is not a matter of coordination. We are very coordinated because we talk to each other. The school talks to the—you know, we talk to each other in many instances. Of course, there will always be one or two where the communication could be better. The issue is that there is just not enough direct service to work with the family.

Recently, the city of Chicago talked about having a truancy ordinance under which the schools would refer all habitual truants to the department of human services. And when I pointed out that if we spent 3 hours a day with everyone who was truant, I would need 100 more staff. Everybody was appalled. But it was just a mathematical number. You take the number of kids, you divide it by the number of hours in a workyear. And if you talk to them for

that period of time you would need 100 or more staff. People aren't willing to pay for that right now.

So I think the young people are right, with some rare exceptions. And there are some very good models in which the city, the State, and the board of education, and not for profits working in schools around key issues. But it is very rare, and they need much more of that in many ways.

Mr. SIMON. Commissioner Walker, we thank you. I have the feeling that the city is getting leadership from you, and we are eager to work with you to be of assistance in this very, very important area.

Ms. WALKER. Thank you. We are glad of your leadership too.

[The prepared statement of Judith Walker follows:]

HOMELESS YOUTH IN CHICAGO
The Need for a Federal Response

Testimony Submitted to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee on the Constitution
Senator Paul Simon, Chairman

BY

Judith Walker, Commissioner
Department of Human Services
City of Chicago
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I AM JUDITH WALKER, COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO. MINE IS THE DEPARTMENT OF LAST RESORT. IT SPENDS APPROXIMATELY \$115 MILLION EACH YEAR ON SERVICES FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE OF CHICAGO. USING ITS OWN 1100 EMPLOYEES AND OVER 500 CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH PRIVATE AGENCIES, THE DEPARTMENT DIRECTS ITS RESOURCES, ABOUT 80% OF WHICH COME FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, TO HELPING VICTIMS, FAMILIES, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN.

THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY BEFORE YOU TODAY. I CHAIR THE MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON THE HOMELESS, A PLANNING AND COORDINATING COUNCIL THAT INCLUDES A NUMBER OF CITY, STATE AND PRIVATE AGENCIES, AS WELL AS SERVICE PROVIDERS AND ADVOCACY GROUPS ALL CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEM OF HOMELESSNESS. BOTH AS CHAIR OF THE TASK FORCE AND AS COMMISSIONER OF HUMAN SERVICES, I AM ACUTELY AWARE OF THE GROWING NUMBER OF HOMELESS YOUTH ARRIVING ON THE STREETS OF CHICAGO. THREE YEARS AGO THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS YOUTH HERE WAS ALREADY ESTIMATED AT 10,000, OF WHOM 4,000 WERE UNDER 18 AND 6,000 WERE BETWEEN 18 AND 21 YEARS OLD. ONE STUDY FOUND THAT UNLESS A HOMELESS YOUTH HAD INDEPENDENT RESOURCES, IF HE OR SHE STAYED ON THE STREET FOR AS LONG AS TWO WEEKS, THAT YOUTH WOULD BE FORCED TO TURN TO PROSTITUTION OR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY.

THIS GRIM PICTURE IS LITTLE RELIEVED BY THE FEW SERVICES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO THESE YOUNG PEOPLE. ONLY ONE-FIFTH OF ALL HOMELESS YOUTH IN CHICAGO HAVE ANY CONTACT AT ALL WITH A CHILD WELFARE AGENCY, AND THERE ARE FEWER THAN 100 EMERGENCY SHELTER BEDS AVAILABLE TO THEM. WHILE CHILD WELFARE IS A STATE RESPONSIBILITY IN ILLINOIS, THE STATE HAS FOUND ITSELF UNABLE TO SUPPLY THE NECESSARY SERVICES, AND SO THE CITY HAS TRIED TO SUPPLEMENT THE STATE'S EFFORTS BY FUNDING A VERY FEW SHELTER BEDS (NOW TOTALLING 19.) IN ALL, HOWEVER, CURRENTLY AVAILABLE SERVICES, INCLUDING DROP-IN CENTERS AND COUNSELING AS WELL AS SHELTERS STILL LEAVE MUCH THE GREATER PART OF THE NEED UNMET. THE NEED IS VAST, VASTLY EXCEEDING THE CAPACITIES OF CITIES, IN WHICH THE NEED IS DISPROPORTIONATELY CONCENTRATED. IT IS REALLY A NATIONAL NEED THAT CALLS FOR A NATIONAL RESPONSE.

YOUTHS BECOME HOMELESS AND ALONE BECAUSE FAMILIES FAIL. FAMILIES FAIL WHEN THE DEMANDS ON THEM AND THEIR MEMBERS EXCEED THEIR COPING CAPACITIES. WE KNOW THAT ABOUT HALF OF ALL HOMELESS YOUTHS HAVE BEEN ABUSED OR NEGLECTED. MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF THE HOMELESS YOUTHS IN ILLINOIS WERE REJECTED OR DESERTED BY PARENTS WHO SUFFERED FROM ALCOHOLISM, MENTAL ILLNESS, OR ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION. FOR SOME OF THE GIRLS AMONG THESE YOUNG PEOPLE, BECOMING PREGNANT NECESSITATED THEIR DEPARTURE FROM THEIR FAMILIES. FOR SOME OTHERS PREGNANCY REPRESENTED AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEAVE FAMILIES THAT HAD FAILED TO SUPPORT AND PROTECT THEM. FOR STILL OTHER BOYS AND GIRLS ALIKE, FAMILY BONDS HAD GROWN SO ATTENUATED THAT A PREMATURE STEP TOWARD A FANTASIZED ADULTHOOD SEEMED TO ENTAIL NO LOSS. AND FOR SOME HOMELESS YOUTH, IT WAS THE ENTIRE FAMILY'S LOSS OF SHELTER THAT PRECIPITATED THE YOUTH'S STRIKING OUT ALONE, ESPECIALLY IN THE CASE OF TEENAGE BOYS WHOM FAMILY SHELTERS OFTEN REFUSE TO SERVE.

THESE PHENOMENA ARE NOT PECULIAR TO CHICAGO OR ILLINOIS. WHILE MANY HOMELESS YOUTHS MIGRATE TO CHICAGO, THE PRESSURES THAT SUNDER THEIR FAMILIES ARE BEARING DOWN ON MILLIONS OF OTHERS, ESPECIALLY LOW-INCOME FAMILIES, ACROSS THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. NATIONALLY, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT FEWER THAN HALF OF ALL HOMELESS YOUTH CAN RETURN TO THEIR FAMILIES.

THESE BROKEN FAMILIES WERE PUSHED BEYOND THEIR LIMITS. THEY DID NOT COPE. EVEN THE BEST INTENTIONED FAILED TO SUPPLY THE SECURITY AND PROMISE ON WHICH YOUTHS MUST DRAW AS THEY MATURE. ALL TOO OFTEN THE REASONS FOR THESE FAILURES LIE IN ANTI-FAMILY POLICIES PURSUED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN RECENT YEARS. THEY ARE POLICIES THAT HAVE MADE WORKING PEOPLE POOR, AND DEPENDENT POOR PEOPLE POORER. THEY ARE POLICIES THAT HAVE UNDERMINED THE COPING CAPACITIES OF MILLIONS OF AMERICAN FAMILIES.

LET ME REMIND YOU. THE NATION TOLERATED A DEVASTATING ECONOMIC RECESSION IN THE EARLY 1980S; FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR INCOME MAINTENANCE, SOCIAL SERVICES, AND LOW COST HOUSING WERE SHARPLY CURTAILED; AND ECONOMIC GROWTH SINCE THE NADIR OF THE RECESSION HAS SUBSTITUTED LOW WAGE FOR HIGH WAGE EMPLOYMENT.

MORE SPECIFICALLY, IN THE HALF DECADE BETWEEN 1979 AND 1984, 60% OF THE NEWLY CREATED JOBS PAID LESS THAN 60% OF THE OFFICIAL POVERTY LEVEL FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR. DURING ROUGHLY THE SAME PERIOD CASH BENEFIT PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, WHICH HAD LIFTED ONE-FIFTH OF POOR AMERICANS OUT OF POVERTY IN 1979, WERE SO ERODED THAT BY 1985 THEY OVERCAME POVERTY FOR ONLY ABOUT ONE-TENTH OF THE POOR. THAT IS, FOR ONLY HALF AS MANY. IN ILLINOIS AFDC PAYMENTS TO A FAMILY OF FOUR NOW AMOUNT TO ONLY 40% OF THE OFFICIAL POVERTY INCOME, AND EVEN THE ADDITION OF FOOD STAMPS AND ENERGY ASSISTANCE BRINGS THE TOTAL TO ONLY 72% OF THE POVERTY

LINE. IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT SINCE 1970 THE REAL VALUE OF THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR A FOUR PERSON FAMILY HAS DECLINED BY 53%; IT HAS BEEN CUT IN HALF!

IRONICALLY, APPALLINGLY, THE DIMINISHED INCOMES OF THE POOR MUST BE USED TO COMPETE FOR A DIMINISHING SUPPLY OF LOW INCOME HOUSING. FEDERAL GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT FOR LOW INCOME HOUSING FELL BY 75% BETWEEN 1981 AND 1987. THIS FOLLOWED A DECADE IN WHICH THE NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS AFFORDABLE TO LOW INCOME PERSONS WAS REDUCED BY FULLY 80%. IN ILLINOIS THE NUMBER OF LOW INCOME RENTERS NOW EXCEEDS THE NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE UNITS BY A FACTOR OF ALMOST THREE.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS UNDERMINED THE INCOMES AND ABANDONED THE HOUSING OF LOW INCOME AMERICAN FAMILIES. SHOULD WE BE SURPRISED, THEN, THAT THESE FAMILIES ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF WEAKNESS? DOUBLING UP, TRIPLING UP TO FIND EVEN SERIOUSLY SUBSTANDARD HOUSING; WORKING SECOND OR EVEN THIRD JOBS, EVEN IN TWO INCOME FAMILIES, TO MAKE ENDS MEET; RETREATING INTO NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENTS SO ADAPTED TO ASTRINGENT POVERTY THAT LEGITIMATE COMMERCE HAS COME TO A VIRTUAL STANDSTILL, AND AN ETHOS OF VIOLENCE CASTS A PALL OVER SUCH INNOCENT PURSUITS AS SCHOOLS, SOCIAL AND GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES, AND INFORMAL SOCIALIZING. THAT THESE OVERBURDENED FAMILIES ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF WEAKNESS SHOULD NOT SURPRISE US AT ALL, NOR SHOULD WE BE SURPRISED TO FIND A SIGNIFICANT INCIDENCE OF FAMILY FAILURE AMONG MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES THAT ARE SIMILARLY STRESSED, AND WHOSE INCOMES AND HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS ARE ONLY SLIGHTLY LESS FRAGILE.

YOUTH BECOME HOMELESS BECAUSE FAMILIES FAIL. FAMILIES FAIL BECAUSE THEIR COPING CAPACITIES ARE OVERTAXED, AND THEIR COPING CAPACITIES ARE OVERTAXED IN LARGE PART BECAUSE POLICIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAVE HAMPERED THEIR ACCESS TO DECENT JOBS AND INCOME, AS WELL AS TO THE VERY SOCIAL SERVICES THAT CAN HELP YOUTHS AND FAMILIES COPE WITH THIS STRESS. THESE POLICIES MUST BE REVERSED. THAT IS THE FIRST AND FOREMOST REQUIREMENT. ESPECIALLY INCOMES AND HOUSING. THESE ARE NATIONAL PROBLEMS THAT WILL YIELD ONLY TO NATIONAL SOLUTIONS.

WE KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT POVERTY DOES NOT LEAD INEVITABLY TO HOMELESSNESS, AND THAT MANY HOMELESS YOUTHS ARE CHILDREN OF MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES THAT HAVE FAILED. WE KNOW, THEREFORE, THAT ADEQUATE JOBS, INCOMES, AND HOUSING POLICIES ARE NEITHER NECESSARY NOR SUFFICIENT APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEMS OF HOMELESS YOUTH.

THE MISSING INGREDIENT IS SOCIAL SERVICES. IT IS CLEAR FROM OUR RECENT EXPERIENCE WITH OUR FEW YOUTH SHELTER BEDS, AS WELL AS FROM OUR EXTENSIVE WORK WITH FAMILIES, THAT PROFESSIONALLY DIRECTED SOCIAL SUPPORT AND COUNSELING SERVICES CAN OFTEN PREVENT OR CUT SHORT A SPELL OF HOMELESSNESS FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES, AMONG THE POOR AND THE MIDDLE CLASS ALIKE.

RIGHT NOW, TO HELP YOUTHS WHO ARE CURRENTLY HOMELESS, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MUST BUILD ON THE EXCELLENT BEGINNING MADE BY SENATOR SIMON'S PROTOTYPE PROGRAM TO PROVIDE THEM WITH SHELTER AND BASIC LIFE SKILLS. ILLINOIS NEEDS HELP IN PROVIDING OVERNIGHT, TRANSITIONAL, AND SECOND STAGE HOUSING, AS WELL AS SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR THOUSANDS OF YOUTHS WHO COME FROM ALL OVER THE MIDWEST ONLY TO FALL INTO THE SQUALOR OF STREET LIFE IN THE CITY. EXPANDED MANYFOLD, THIS KIND OF PROGRAM WILL AMELIORATE THE EFFECTS OF FAMILY FAILURE WHILE POLICIES AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT, INCOME, AND HOUSING ARE REBUILDING FAMILIES' CAPACITIES.

Mr. SIMON. Thank you. Our hearing stands adjourned. Let me just add my thanks to all the witnesses, also to my staff, also to Senator Spector for sending his staff here. Our hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]